

CLASS IDENTIFICATION IN POST-INDUSTRIAL AMERICA

By

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CLASS IDENTIFICATION IN POST-INDUSTRIAL AMERICA

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This dissertation examines class identification in the United States in recent years. Class identification is a significant, yet often neglected, area of research in the study of social stratification. This concept refers to people's sense of their location in the society's class hierarchy. Class identification influences people's decision-making about where they live, who they marry, what work they pursue, and how they vote. Nearly two decades have passed since the last comprehensive study of class identification was published. Since then, much has changed about class hierarchy in the United States, including significant growth in the proportion of low-paying service sector jobs, a continued rise in female workforce participation, and welfare reform. This dissertation explores three of the most important issues about class identification: the sources of class identification, the relationship to class identification and political

behavior and the impact of marriage and work as sources of class identification among women. The relationship between class identification and race is also considered. This dissertation uses data from the 1996 General Social Survey to test these relationships. Logit models are used to determine the likelihood of higher-class identification for each independent variable. Many important findings are produced, including a relationship between education, income, and class. This study also finds a relationship between class and political party affiliation. More controversial findings include the mediation of working wives' class identification by gender roles and the lack of reliable association between race and class identification.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the sources of subjective class identification and the importance of this identification. Class identification is a significant, yet often neglected, area of research in the study of social stratification. I have selected this topic because it lies at the intersection of my primary and secondary areas of concentration: social inequality and family, respectively. In this first chapter, I will define class identification, describe its implications, discuss the significance of this study, and explain my research questions.

Defining Class Identification

The first task in defining class identification is to offer a conceptual definition. In so doing, I will differentiate between subjective and objective class. Secondly, I offer an operational definition of this concept. In the process, I will suggest valid and reliable ways of using class identification as a variable. All societies demonstrate structures of inequality. And all members within these societies are affected by this structural inequality. Moreover, people are frequently aware, to various degrees, of this inequality and its effects. Class identification refers to people's perceived place in a structure of stratification.

Class identification is a subjective process, which produces a cognitive class or identity frequently referred to as "subjective class" in the literature (Carrere, 1948:34). The study of class identification posits that people share a common, if only general, understanding of their society's structure of inequality and their place within it. The underlying logic is that people of similar status have a similar quality of life and social experiences, and that class identification represents their sense of socio-economic group membership. In the classic study *The Psychology of Social Classes*, Richard Carrere argued that class identification is internalized. He states: "Class, as distinguished from stratum, can well be regarded as a [social] psychological phenomenon in the fullest sense of the term. That is, when a class is a part of his ego, a feeling of his part of belongingness to something" (1948:27).

The notion of 'objective' class refers to a different aspect of the structure of stratification. Objective class, as used by Karl Marx (1848), refers to an aggregate of people who share the same relation to the system of production and to other members of the society. Phrased in more modern language, objective class refers to a broad pattern of experience among large aggregates of people (Carrere, 1948:34-35). For example, people with similar levels of occupational prestige or who work in similar occupational categories typically have similar levels of educational attainment. Note the word "similar." People are often placed into statistical aggregates based on their shared economic interests. Thus, from this point of view, classes are statistical constructs, not fully

understood at the individual level of analysis. Classes are generalizations that “arise from common economic interests” (Benda, 1974: 153).

Researchers who explore class identification frequently link this measure of subjective class to measures of objective class. For example, both Cantors (1948) and Jackman and Jackman (1963) sought to determine the “accuracy” of subjects’ identification by comparing their subjective class to predetermined objective categories based on income and occupational prestige. Both found a strong correlation between measures of objective and subjective class.

Like most other forms of stock knowledge, subjective class is learned through early childhood socialization, participation with social institutions, and ongoing face-to-face interaction. People are constantly exposed to images of what is wealth, what is poverty, and what it means to be “middle class.” As Reinhard Bendix explains, “Before the individual reaches maturity, he [or she] has participated in [the] family’s claim to social prestige, its occupational subculture, and educational level” (1974: 153).

Both men and women establish a subjective sense of their place in the stratification structure in two ways. First, they are taught class identity by significant others. This process occurs through open declarations of class during family discussions or through sub-grouping behavior. The latter might include referring to other classes in derogatory terms or the use of other distancing strategies. For example, statements such as “we are not like them” may be made (see MacLeod, 1990). The second way people establish (or reinforce)

their class identity results from their perception of how others react to them (Cooley 1902/1995). Numerous studies reveal that negative interclass and intraclass appraisals have a significant effect on individuals' sense of esteem and identity studies (Jensen and Cobb 1972; Rossi, 1991; MacLenn 1995). Examples of this process include hateful terms in comments about poor children's attire in school. Doctors receive reverential treatment in public places and businesses, partly because of their access to knowledge but also because of their assumed higher class. Though frequently measured as a static quality, subjective class is more accurately seen as an ongoing process.

Even so, most operational definitions treat subjective class in static terms. This strategy is more practical given the tendency to use single, point-in-time methods. Richard Centers provided the most utilized operational definition of class identification. His question used a four-range typology for responses: it read, "If you were asked to use one of these four names for your social class, which would you say you belonged in: lower working, middle, or upper class?" (1946:211). Centers tested the question in 1949 by surveying a nationwide random sample of men. He and subsequent researchers found that people readily identify with these labels. The research suggests that subjective class is a well-known concept in public discourse.

Robert Morris and Robert Murphy (1986) seek to clarify and build on Centers's work by placing the concept class identification into a larger context. Using a heuristic model, they describe how individuals' subjective perceptions of

class vary. They also discussed the probable implications of this identification. They suggest that individual identifications occur on a continuum from a complete lack of class awareness, which they contend is rare, to a rare identity that might sponsor membership revolutionary organizations, also rare. The center of the continuum is characterized by identification with discrete social classes and, in some cases, an articulated awareness of shared values and interests. Alamo and Murphy assert that people are able to identify with discrete social classes, and that this identification frequently entails a specific awareness of how class constrains choice. Their model discusses the connection between subjective class and individual and social action. As awareness of subjective class strengthens it stimulates more value-rational behavior. This behavior varies from simple forms such as peer differentiation among those not keenly aware of their own class, to more drastic forms such as political protest among those with a strong class-consciousness.

Table 1.1
Morris and Murphy's Continuum of Class Identification

Class identification varies such that people are

- 1) unaware of class-based differences and therefore class-based inequality. This is only a hypothetical end-point in the continuum.
- 2) aware of classes and are able to place themselves in broad categories, but not discrete socio-economic categories. This is a common assumption in studies of occupational prestige.
- 3) able to identify with discrete socio-economic categories. Minimally, this is "true" class identification.
- 4) able to identify with specific class interests (political and economic). Morris and Murphy call this "interest group" consciousness.
- 5) willing to act to advance or preserve their class interests within existing institutions. This is what Morris refers to as a class "for real."
- 6) willing to advance their class interests by disrupting the existing social order. This is a hypothetical end-point: smaller social units (cabals) sponsor revolution.

In addition to describing the theoretical rings of class identity, Morris and Murphy also suggest the conceptual link between subjective and objective class

They assert that the communication of similar identities results in the formation of collective identity, a new cognitive structure. In other words, people may identify as working class, or what Morris and Murphy classify as type two. But they may also develop an understanding that this identity is actively shared with others, type 3 and above. This recognition may lead to collective action, which may alter the objective structure of stratification in that society. For example, in the last century, when coal miners in the eastern United States shared their beliefs that they were being exploited, they were then able to organize protests and resistance (Ridd and Callaway, 1987). This process eventually resulted in some nominal improvement in working conditions and in the overall quality of life for these workers. This illustrates why class identification merits study: undesired changes in the patterns of the subjective process can lead to changes in objective class conditions.

In the late 1970s a related line of scholarship emerged. These efforts, like Morris and Murphy's, sought to build on the conceptual foundation first laid by Centers. As with Centers, these scholars sought to dismantle the dichotomous conceptualization of class and identification left by Marx. Frank Parker, for example, argues that the majority of people in modern post-industrial societies do not identify as clearly bourgeoisie or proletarian, but rather share some qualities of each (1979:22-23). He argues that members of the post-industrial middle class, for example, have lost some of the autonomy, security, and perquisites that formerly defined that class. These changes have come about as a result of

increasing corporate profit margins, rising credentialism, and the substitution of office work by computers. But Olin Wright (1979) calls this new class the "petty bourgeoisie." He suggests that the people occupying the middle of class hierarchies (not necessarily the "middle class") see themselves as significantly different from capitalists, but apathetic toward traditional working-class occupations and lifestyles. Entry-level professionals, most recently educators and human service workers, now make less money and have fewer benefits than many people in traditional (though disappearing) blue-collar jobs. Even so, they still define themselves as "middle class." Parish (1978) and Wright (1979) both suggest that class identification is now more complicated today than at the time of Gentry's research. Classes are fuzzy objects, and their boundaries are difficult to determine. And yet, as I will show in the next chapter, Gentry's class identification measure (and its derivatives) shows remarkable reliability over time. This dissertation examines the continued suitability of Gentry's model and seeks to determine if people still identify with traditional class labels. Having discussed class identification, I will now describe the implications of class identification for individuals.

The Implications of Class Identification

Class identification is part of the social self. The "I am middle class" statement asserts where a person stands in relation to one's political and socio-economic environment. Such assertions are important because people's view of

their location in the class hierarchy influences their everyday decision making. For example, people's perception of their class shapes where they choose to live. Mary R. Jackson and Robert M. Jackson find that class strongly influences the size of home people aspire to own and the type of neighborhood in which they feel comfortable (1985:305). I will discuss this issue in detail in Chapter Two.

Jackson and Jackson also find that class identification influences people's significant social contacts (1982). Their class identification influences the people they choose as friends. Americans tend to have peer groups composed of members of the same class. Peer selection begins in childhood where the composition of peer-groups is primarily determined by neighborhood, school, church, and other family contacts. But it also continues into adulthood where people have more control to expand their networks.

Class identification also influences whom people marry. Americans tend to marry within, or at least near, their own class (Jorgensen, 1977). This effect transcends simple explanations such as proximity. People prefer mates of their own class. That is, people's subjective class sets their self-marginality and their expectations for whom they expect to marry (Pearlin, 1971). This orientation occurs because Americans expect to have less 'in-common' with people of a significantly different class. For example, a common assumption is that people who are lower in class are less able to contribute to a desirable (material) quality of life. In the opposite case, potential mates of higher class are assumed to have unrealistic expectations.

Subjective class is also linked to occupational prestige. A possible explanation of this pattern is found in the link between class identification and occupational aspirations. Significant research indicates that people's occupational aspirations are influenced by their class identification (Jennett and Cobb, 1972; Oakes, 1985; Imeda, and 1995). As people generally seek to avoid reductions in their standard of living (Stasler, 1988), those who perceive themselves as very wealthy have a limited set of desirable occupations. This set might include entrepreneurial, investor, or even philanthropic. Poor persons also have a limited set of legitimate aspirations, usually as a result of their limited human capital, such as education or trade skills. Their opportunities are not likely to include occupations in the fields such as investing or technology intensive entrepreneurship, for example.

Finally, class identification is related to political ideology and behavior, such as voting and party membership. The causal direction of this relationship is disputed, but most observers agree that class and politics in America are integrally bound (Dwyer, Verba, and Schlozman, 1985). Cutler (1984) found that the content of political ideology, for example, is rooted in perceived class interest. That is, people's attitudes about the size of government, social welfare programs, taxation, and social justice, for example, are products of their perceived place in society. Subsequent researchers, such as Jackson and Jackson (1992), found similar relationships. For example, people with higher subjective class desire smaller government and fewer social welfare programs

People with lower subjective class more concerns about unfair treatment in the justice system more frequently than members of other classes (Jahoda Sakisman Brady and Lee, 1993). Having discussed what class identification is and what it means to individuals, I will now describe why I choose to examine this topic now. I will also describe the ways in which this study makes an original contribution to inquiry on class identification.

The Significance of This Inquiry

This study is important partly because of its timing. Nearly twenty years have passed since the last comprehensive analysis of class identification conducted by Jahoda and Jackman (1983). Since that time, much has changed about the occupational structure in the United States. Perhaps placed too polemically, the working class is no longer best described as "blue-collar" but rather as "McJobs." But underlying this controversial notion is the significant growth of low-paying service sector jobs, accounting for at least 75% of workforce growth since 1980 (Johnston and Ficker, 1987; Lawrence, 1992). There are other changes in American society and other issues not present at the time of either Cantor's or Jackman and Jackman's research. These trends include the continued rise in female workforce participation and the conjunction of cultural changes making this increase more socially permissible. The increased participation may impact the extent to which working women today share in their class identification, as opposed to previous decades in which they

were more likely to borrow it from their husbands. There was a significant increase in the number of wealthy Americans, beginning in the mid 1980s, largely spurred on by the Reagan Administration's neoliberal policy. This trend may significantly increase the proportions of Americans identifying as wealthy. However, it is also possible that Americans have expanded the definitions of "middle-class" to include the "job rich" or wealthy people who are still dependent on corporations for their income (Broughley, 1999). At the other end of the stratification structure, the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 has transformed the experience of poverty in America. The receipt of public aid is now less likely, possibly swelling the proportion of Americans who see themselves as working class. Alternatively, the term "underemployed" has entered the public lexicon and many blue-collar Americans who have experienced declines in real wages for more than a decade may now identify as being poor. This study seeks to establish the patterns and sources of class identification in America in light of these changes. I want to determine the impact on class identification of contemporary economic, social, and cultural conditions. In the next section, I will discuss how I will proceed exploring class identification in post-industrial America.

Research Objectives

In this dissertation I propose to test three of the most important questions about people's class identification. First, family of origin has the greatest impact

on people's class identification. Second, sources of class identification among married women are mediated by gender norms. Finally, race mediates the effect of class identity for minority groups. Each of my research-questions is reported below along with related or clarifying details.

The foundation brick in the study of class identification is its sources. But is "where do people learn class identity?" Previous research indicates that family is the most significant source of subjective class. The dissertation tests the sources of class identification and measures the strength of family of origin on our class identity. I seek to determine if family continues to serve as an adequate and exclusive explanation of subjective class. Previous research finds that racial/ethnic groups are less likely to identify with a particular socio-economic class (Jackman and Jackman, 1993). This suggests that race, in addition to family, is a significant influence on class identity. I will examine the relationship of race on class identification. Expressed formally, my first research question is:

- 1) What factors contribute to class identification?
 - A) Is family of origin class is more powerful predictor of class identification than any other single characteristic?
 - B) Is class identification the same for different races?

Much of the motivation for studying class identification is rooted in the implicit hypothesis that it, as with other components of our identity, is tied to behavior (Gastans 1948:3-4). Though the causal direction of the relationship is debated, there is good evidence suggesting that class identity predicts a broad

range of attitudes and behavior. Of all the possible measures of this relationship, political attitudes and behavior are among the most interesting. Cantors suggests that political behavior is ultimately class behavior. He asserts that class identity is the source and motivation of political action, whether it is simple voting or revolutionary conflict. Thus, collective recognition of cultural and economic interests intrinsic to class identification affects the content of a society's political process. My second question is thus:

- 2) How do socio-political characteristics, such as party affiliation or ideology, predict class identification?
- A) Is this relationship weaker for African Americans compared to whites?

Cantors's hypothesized link between class and ideology is not undisputed. Several contemporary political sociologists argue that class and political ideology are "uncoupling" (see Marrow, 1985) that is, subjective class no longer predicts political ideology. These researchers hypothesize that religious, ethnic, regional, occupational, and other characteristics confound the influence of subjective class on political ideology. Jackman and Jackman also find a weaker relationship between class identity and ideology, but they explain this result by suggesting that Americans are simply ignorant of the socio-economic consequences of political action. I will examine these issues by looking at the degree to which subjective class and ideology co-vary. For elaboration I will explore a related component of ideology: how people explain social inequality. As noted in the

relationship between the subjective class and the tendency to explain inequality using stratification or achievement.

The last issue I will examine is the class identification of employed women. This issue lies directly at the intersection of my two areas of interest, inequality and family. Marriages in which both spouses are employed outside the home are one of the most interesting settings in which class identification occurs. Much debate exists in contemporary literature about how this process takes place. The focus of this debate centers on the primary source of 'working women' class identification. One perspective holds that women borrow their class identity from their husbands (see Goldthorpe, 1984), the other that women identify (or 'absorb') their own individual class identity with their husbands (see Fister and Hargens, 1979, or Van Velsor and Beeghly, 1979). I will further discuss this debate in the next chapter. The study seeks to improve the understanding of working women class identification by exploring the impact of gender roles on wives class identification. Using recent data I will reexamine Beeghly and Cochran's (1988) findings that the higher the class identity, the lower the likelihood of employed married women having traditional gender role orientation. Therefore, my final research question is:

- 3) What factors best predict married women's class identity?
 - A) Specifically, how much does husbands' occupational prestige influence wives' class identification?
 - B) Do traditional or nontraditional gender roles influence this?
 - C) Is the relationship weaker for African Americans compared to whites?

Overview of Dissertation

Having defined and discussed class identification, I will now outline the structure of this dissertation. In the next chapter, I review the relevant literature on class identification in more detail. This literature is divided into several areas or "themes." The first theme is the use of the concept in classic sociological works. The second theme is modern, mostly critical, demonstrations of class identification in the United States. The final theme includes contemporary applications of class identification, particularly those that focus on the role of class identification among married women. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the theoretical framework in which this dissertation is based. This framework is derived from the literature reviewed.

In the third chapter I will discuss the research methodology of this study. I begin by discussing the data set and how the data were obtained. Then I will discuss the measures that I selected to test my research questions. I will discuss related issues of data availability and validity where needed. I will also describe the ordering of these variables in proposed directional models. Lastly I discuss the techniques I will use to analyze these data.

I will describe findings for the first set of research questions in Chapter Four. I will report a bivariate analysis of class identification, as well as regression data for sources of class identification. I plan to show data comparing family of origin as compared to other variables. Lastly, I will also use race as a control for my regressions. I offer tables where needed.

Chapter Five will include data for the political replications of class identification as well as regression data for voting, party affiliation, and ideology measures. I will discuss additional information for the influence of race on these distributions where it is significant. Logistic data for the achievement/education measure will be described in some detail. Here, too, I offer tables where needed.

In Chapter Six, I will describe class identification among married women and regression data on class-identity of working wives. I will compare these findings to previous research and describe any similarities or differences. I will make logistic comparisons to determine if they are more likely to know or share their identity. Then, I will modify the initial analysis by including a gender role variable in a multivariate analysis. I will use race as a control in multivariate analysis. I will describe the impact of this control.

In Chapter Seven, I will discuss my conclusions, including an analysis of initial hypotheses and suggestions for future research. Lastly, I will offer final comments about the continued significance of class identification in post-Industrial America.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of the literature on class identification is divided into three parts. In the first part, I explore the way in which this concept was adopted in classical sociology, especially in the works of Karl Marx and Max Weber. The second part describes the modern, empirical use of class identification, beginning with Richard Carters's commendable work. I then examine Mary and Robert Jackson's research. The third part describes more recent applications of class identification, particularly those that focus on the role of class identification among married couples. The final section of the chapter discusses the theoretical framework in which this discussion is based. I will also comment on the ways the reviewed literature influences my research questions.

Class Identification in Classical Sociology

None of the classical theorists use the term "class identification." Even so, it is adopted in both Karl Marx and Max Weber's works. It is placed in quotation marks here to signify this adoption. In this section, I will show how their writings fit into the subsequent literature on class identification, as established by Richard Carters.

Karl Marx and Class Identification

The issue of class identification has its roots in Karl Marx's work. He offered the first extensive, critical description of capitalism—its history, characteristics, and its hoped-for future demise. Although his work is flawed in many ways, it remains a prescient analysis of capitalist societies. Strangely, Marx never defined the term “class” even though it is one of his two or three most important concepts. At the end of *Volume Three of Capital* (which Friedrich Engels assembled after Marx's death), there is a short (see page) unfinished chapter simply titled “Classes,” but it is not very useful (1868/1905). Marx's most complete analysis of class occurs in *The Communist Manifesto*, and that will be my focus here (Marx and Engels, 1848). In what follows, I shall refer only to Marx. Although the *Manifesto* is co-authored – indeed, Engels wrote a first draft of it in October 1847 in the fall of 1847 – Marx completely rewrote it in January 1848. Engels later asserted, and most scholars agree, that all the basic ideas along with the power of the prose came from Marx (see Bakin, 1988).

The *Manifesto* opens with the famous line: “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle.” Marx continues by observing that in every period “oppressor and oppressed stood in constant opposition to one another [and] carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes” (1848-49). Marx believes that in every society a small group of people own or control what he

called the "means of production." They always oppress those who did not own property. In the *Manifesto*, Marx argues that the historical rise of capitalism simply meant the substitution of new forms of oppression and new forms of class struggle. He believes strongly as it turned out, that the class structure was becoming amplified. As he puts it, "Society as a whole is splitting up more and more into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (1848:474).

The accuracy of Marx's historical interpretations and political desires are irrelevant here. The essence of Marx's notion of class is implicit in the lines above but can be clearly stated: oppression (Tarrow, Seasholtz, and Powers, 1984:106). Classes have opposing interests. But they are connected; they are part of a class structure. Marx's evolving contribution lies in the recognition that in every society some people benefit and some do not. Some people have an interest in maintaining the status quo and some have an interest in change. Which side they are on depends on their location in the class structure. In the *Manifesto*, Marx argues that because the proletarians were systematically exploited and alienated, they had an interest in change. In fact, he believed, it was in their best interest to overthrow the entire society and substitute a new form of social organization, based on communal principles. As he puts it, "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" (1848:481). Conversely, of course, the

bourgeoisie, or capitalists, find an interest in maintaining a status quo in which they were benefiting. The point to remember, however, is that Marx's analysis can be generalized away from the historical context in which he put it. In every society, classes have opposing interests.

But classes are not always organized. Their members do not automatically know what their interests are. Marx believes, probably rightly, that the problem is especially characteristic of subordinate classes. The *Manifesto* focuses on the problem of developing a collective awareness of these interests and organizing the means to act on them. In brief, he describes the conditions necessary for the proletarian's transformation from a 'class in itself' to a 'class for itself.'

Marx describes how the need for constantly expanding markets, ever growing profits, and greater amount of labor creates a system of increasing alienation of workers from the products of their labor. Marx's use of the term 'alienation' is complicated. Not only do workers lose control of the products they produce, but they also are reduced to the status of a *thing*, akin to machinery. To fuel the capital accumulation process that is inherent in capitalism, workers must produce more for less pay. They are given only enough to sustain themselves and reproduce more workers who, in turn, not only serve to replace the sick and aged, but also function to increase the total size of the available workforce. This process increases competition for jobs and lower wages. To complete the cycle of alienation, workers return their wages to the capitalist.

class. He writes: "The owner is the exploiter of the laborer at an end: that he receives his wage in cash, therefore is not upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie: the landlord, the shopkeeper, the moneylender etc." (1943-473). By alienation Marx thus means a loss not only of control but of humanity. "To use more contemporary vocabulary" in capitalism workers become the oil that greases the machine.

But in no alienating system, capitalism needs its own labor. For this exploitation is the very impetus for the transformation of the working class from a "class in itself" to a "class for itself." Workers do not always cooperate with the capitalists, at the inception of capitalism workers resist.

At first the contest is carried on by individual laborers; then by the whole people of a factory; then by operatives of one trade in one locality, against their individual bourgeois who exploit them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the individual instruments of production: they destroy imported values that compete with their labor; they attempt to prevent machinery; they sell machines abroad; they seek to restore by force the wretched status of the workman of the Middle Ages. (1949-480)

At this stage, the workers are not collectively identifying as a class of people. Only primary group/bands or similar localized identities unite them. Marx suggests that this disorganized phase of resistance can continue for an extended period of time. This is due, in part, to the counterattacks leveled by the ruling class. Often this exercise of control is violent police action, but sometimes it is more indirect. The bourgeoisie seeks to "trap" the workers, diverting their anger toward other elements of the social structure.

In order to attain its own political ends, [the bourgeoisie] is compelled to set the whole proletarian in motion. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies: the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the semi-feudal bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeois. (1949: 482)

Eventually, however, after too long the workers' anger became exhausted. The promise of further exploitation created through this time increases in severity and becomes more widespread. The further institutionalisation of capitalism, its increased representation in media and education, and the expanding control between ever-growing numbers of workers at present is slowly increasing awareness among workers of their own concrete interests. Eventually, the bourgeoisie are unable to stop more systematic social organisation of workers.

The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their [the workers'] livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workers and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon the workers begin to form combinations (Trade Unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provisions beforehand for these occasional needs. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots. (1949: 482)

Here again that those lesser results are not likely to succeed often. Here is a long-term gain from these actions: they increase public discourse and raise the awareness of other workers. With the increase in discourse between the two classes, what would be called "class identification" on both sides becomes clearer. Though the transformation of workers to a class "for itself" is slowed by

political enlightening: the desperate resolutions of the bourgeoisie serve to increase the power and centralisation of the movement. Further, the bourgeoisie must fight on many fronts, especially with capitalists in other nations. To facilitate their other conflicts, Marx predicts that the bourgeoisie will enlist the political assistance of their own workers. In turn, offering political models and education with them. These then become additional tools for enjoining the bond to the bourgeoisie (1848: 48). Eventually, the ruling class crumbles under the pressure of the workers and its own weight. Sympathetic bourgeois ("bourgeois ideologists") join the ranks of the revolutionaries. Members of the ruling class turn on each other. At this time the need and plausibility of revolution become most clear. With this new awareness the shackles of false consciousness, preoccupation with local identities, and fear are shed. Workers develop subjective class identification that not only recognizes common interests and a collective membership, but one that promotes their participation in collective action – the revolutionary overthrow of society.

In light of this description, let me revisit the model of class identification developed by Marx and Murphy (1988). Though they sought to clarify Castells's work, not Marx's, their model closely fits with Marx's theory. As with Marx, they suggest that individual identifications occur only in response to a complete lack of class awareness; it is this clarity that might sponsor membership in revolutionary organizations. The center of the continuum is characterized by identification with discrete social classes, and, in some cases, an articulated

awareness of shared values and interests. Morris and Murphy assert that people are able to identify with discrete social classes and that the identification frequently entails a specific awareness of how class constrains choice. Marx describes how capitalism, with its cycle of alienation, supplies the constraint. Morris and Murphy contend that "true" class identity is actively shared with others. Marx describes how this takes place in his discussion of the formation of labor unions. Lastly, as with Marx, Morris and Murphy suggest that class identification may lead to collective action. This has the potential to alter the objective structure of stratification in that society.

A review of Marx's notion of class and its implications for class identification is incomplete without a discussion of his theoretical methodology. As a concept, class is tied to Marx's broad theoretical framework, known today as "dialectical materialism" (Turner, Deshpande, and Powers, 1984: 107). Marx rejects Hegel's view that the material (social) world springs forth from human values and beliefs. Instead, Marx believes that human beings make their own history through their manipulation of the physical world. Society is thus a product of its ability, through technology and organization, to cultivate material conditions into subsistence and, eventually, surplus.

Several additional assumptions are built into Marx's notion of dialectical materialism. The first is that society is not simply an illusion produced by a multiplicity of individual experiences. It is a structure that operates beyond individual experiences. It is a system of interdependent parts, such as

institutions and beliefs, which we can understand only at a larger level of analysis. To Marx, classes are structures that are interconnected with each other in the larger system. The characteristics that are ascribed to one class are not arbitrary, but rather they result from the relationship of that class to other classes. For example, the lower workforce participation of poor people is often explained in the public discourse as the result of dysfunctional characteristics intrinsic to poor individuals. Unemployment rates, however, are a structural phenomenon. Jobs in capitalist societies are like all other material resources: finite. Since the upper middle and working class have more power to secure employment, the likelihood of higher unemployment rates is greater for poor people. Note the interdependence of one structure (class) on others.

Classes are also interconnected in the entire social system. I will further extend my example of class and unemployment by suggesting that individual characteristics are widely distributed among the aggregate of people who seek a job and do not explain unemployment rates. However, structural changes, such as the development of new technologies, affect the employment opportunities of poor people. Greater agricultural or industrial automation means fewer manual jobs for poor people but also more profit for owners. The way people view automation depends on their position in the structure. The two effects, increased profits and lower job opportunities, are simultaneous: they are the products of a single shift in the coherent social structure. Technology is only one social arena where we see class. Class relationships are woven throughout society and

social behavior, including education, religion, recreation, dining or male relations, and medicine. Though Marx is clearly concerned with the relationship of slaves to the means of production, his analysis is correctly extended to the ways social systems function and change (Turner, Beaghtley, and Powers 1988: 102).

The second assumption implicit to Marx's theory is that social change is motivated in all societies. Marx believes that humans always seek to improve their material conditions, and they desire greater security and more surplus resources. Social organization results from the constant and collective action to improve material conditions. Thus the fundamental force of social change is society itself. However, social action to improve material conditions is a univaria in which resources are finite, or at the least created slowly, produces certain "contradictions" (inequality in the ownership of production) which, in turn, produce conflict and change. For example, Marx argues in *Capital and The Communist Manifesto* that the constant tendency to maximize profit in capitalist societies alienates the lower classes (the larger portion of the population) from the benefits of their labor. This cycle inevitably builds to a point where people must revolt (rise) to receive less. The inherent tendency for all people to maximize their material conditions sponsors social action (revolution), and through this action socialism, and eventually communism, emerges. Note that in Marx's mind capitalism is its own ending, and communism is a new phase – one with greater material and social equilibrium.

The third assumption implicit in Marx's theory, which stems directly from the second, is that societal evolution has a predictable direction. Marx, as with every other Enlightenment thinker, believes that humans are constantly progressing toward goals. He believes the future of society is made visible through a close examination of the past. Feudalism and capitalism are historical processes that advanced material conditions (for some). These epochs, and their concomitant social forms, are necessary for the development of the technology and organization that allow cultivation of surplus. Communism would further transform these advancements by equally distributing surplus from "each according to their ability, to each according to their need" (1875/1938: 830). For Marx, class and class identification are predictable historical processes. As society "advances," classes form, differentiate, and become more complex. Marx expected this process to continue through late capitalism until some critical level of differentiation was achieved. As classes struggle with each other, class identification increases and becomes sophisticated.

The fourth and final assumption implicit in Marx's theory is that people have the ability to shape their own histories. This ability is mediated by the predictable patterns of opposition that arise in societies as they evolve. Classes constantly conflict with each other, and through this conflict they modify the structure of society. Marx feels that the extreme living conditions imposed on workers by capitalism would encourage collective resistance. As harsh conditions become more extreme and widespread, workers, having nothing but

that tends to lead self unto and revolt. Collective identification as a class of workers, or "true comradeship," is actually brought about by the exploitation inherent in the system. Large-scale resistance further unites the already closely tied owners. Again, this process shows how Marx's dialectical materialism frames social forms and their stimuli as a singular process. Class identification is not only a requisite for social change, but it is brought about by it.

Though Marx never used the term "class identification," his work is clearly relevant to any inquiry of this concept. Centers firmly roots his investigation in Marx's theory (1949:3-7). The format of Centers's question, "Which would you say you belonged to: lower working, middle, or upper class?" is derived from Marx's class typology. But Marx's influence extends further into Centers's work, to Centers's motivation. Centers began his study near the end of World War II, only a few years removed from the Great Depression. These extreme economic conditions mirrored those predicted by Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*. Though he never addresses the issue directly, it is possible that Centers believes that the revolution was near. In the next section, I will discuss the contributions of Max Weber to the study of class identification.

Max Weber and Class Identification

As with Marx, Max Weber did not use the term "class identification." He was interested, however, in how people's location in the stratification structure affected their interests and behavior. Like Marx, Weber saw that people's

location influences their life choices. For example, middle-class people usually display greater educational attainment, income, and occupational prestige compared to working-class people. The result, Weber argues, is not accidental. It reflects the ability of middle-class people (acting individually, but with a collective impact) to protect their interests. Members of every class, Weber argues, make such attempts. Thus, his analysis implies an implicit awareness of class identification.¹

The terminology Weber uses in describing the stratification structure differs from that of Marx; indeed, it differs from that of all subsequent sociologists. Weber uses the concept "class" to refer to people's economic situation, as indicated by their source and amount of income. In Weber's language, "class-oriented" behavior is "instrumentally rational," that is, means and ends are methodically and objectively calculated based on knowledge. "Status" refers to the values people hold and their evaluations of others. Lifestyle. So people look at others' consumption habits (their cars, their home furnishings), use of leisure time (going to football games versus the ballet), and fundamental values (opposing or funding abortion) and evaluate them. Are they like us? Are they different? In his language, "status-oriented" behavior is "value rational," that is, it reflects people's standards of belief and behavior.

In practice, "class" and "status" are connected because lifestyle depends on income and income allows a certain lifestyle. This interrelationship means that the terms identify the different bases for action by people at each status (or

level of the stratification structure). But Weber's nomenclature has not been adopted. In current usage, the term 'class' refers to both economic and non-economic characteristics of people at each status. This difference in terminology is depicted in Figure 2.1. The left side of the figure displays Weber's distinction between "class" and "status" and the right side indicates that sociologists today use the single term 'class' to refer to both.

Figure 2.1
Differences Between Max Weber's and Modern Terminology *

In Max Weber's terminology, the basis for action varies in terms of



Modern terminology simply refers to

- Class 1
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4

Weber

Class-oriented action is concerned with economic interests: mainly the sources and amount of income. It is instrumentally rational. Status-oriented action is concerned with values, as indicated by housing, friends, marriage partners, leisure-time activities, moral choices, and other elements of lifestyle. It is value rational.

Modern Sociologists

The term class refers to both economic interests and values among people who resemble one another in terms of education, prestige, income and amount of income, education, political power, and other characteristics.

* Source: Stephen Leonard, 2000, *The Structure of Social Stratification in the United States*, p. 5. Reprinted with permission.

Weber's use of the term "status" is important here because it shows that he was sensitive to the fact that people at every class level understand their location in the stratification structure and actively maintain it. He argues, in short, that people discriminate: that is, they evaluate and treat others differently based on their social characteristics. In his commentary on Weber, Randall Benson describes this process (1974). He observes that discrimination reflects the way in which lifestyle is inherent to family experiences. Thus, even prior to reaching maturity, persons benefit from their family's claim to prestige and values. The gifts parents have, religious beliefs, level of education, neighborhood of residence, and other fundamental choices are social markers in which parents and children participate. These experiences mean that families in the same class share a similar style of life even though they are not formally organized. In fact, people from similar backgrounds do not need to be formally organized or even to communicate in order to distinguish those who resemble themselves and to treat people with different characteristics unequally. As Daughley puts it, "They act in concert without being organized to do so" (2000: 4). As I would put it, they identify with a class and act on that basis.

As Weber points out, people in the same class discriminate against others and thereby maintain their lifestyle in readily identifiable ways (1920:305). That they are welcoming to those others considered to be social equals. The manifestations of the process occur in such forms as whom a person marries

later, when one becomes friends with whom one eats with. These people tend to be others like oneself. Second, parents try to socialize their children's potential marriage partners to social equals. This goal is the major dynamic behind neighborhood and school segregation. Third, families practice 'unique social conventions.' They join certain groups, such as folk groups or clubs, and spend leisure time with others who share the same values. Finally, Weber says people try to provide 'privileged modes of acquisition'; they seek to maximize their occupational skills or capital, and pass them on to their children.

Considering this, it is not accidental but one of the major findings in the literature on occupational mobility is that children of white-collar parents tend to obtain white-collar jobs, and children of blue-collar parents tend to obtain blue-collar jobs (Slay and Duncan 1987, Featherman and Jaeger 1978).

Weber's influence on more modern literature is significant. Gensert's thinking, for example, is primarily grounded in Marx, but Weberian notions of class are still evident. Gensert focuses on the role of objective economic interests, such as the sources and amount of income, in class identification. Also in Weber's thinking. Gensert sees class identification as instrumentally rational. Jaskiran and Jaskiran root their investigation even more firmly in Weber's work. Their book differs from Gensert in that they consider class among a constellation of identity variables, particularly race and sex. Implicit in their part of work, class identification is simultaneously instrumental and value rational. Jaskiran and

Jordan, demonstrate that class is, in fact, a Weberian status group. In the next section, I will describe modern literature on class identification in greater detail.

Class Identification in Modern Literature

Empirical examinations of class identification are relatively recent. The first study, Richard Centers's *The Psychology of Social Classes*, appeared about fifty years ago. Robert Hodge and Donald J. Tarnan produced a significant replication of Centers's work twenty years later. Mary and Robert Jordan expanded on Centers's ideas with a robust study published seventeen years ago. The theory and conclusions of these works still shape the research on class identification today.

Richard Centers's *The Psychology of Social Classes*

The first modern examination of the subject is Richard Centers's *The Psychology of Social Classes* (1965). In the following section, I will discuss his critique of Marx and his conceptual and theoretical contribution. Then I will describe his methods and detail his findings.

Centers's critique of Marx and Marxist theory—Centers finds the work of Marx and other classical theorists deficient in their treatment of subjective class. Though his work is clearly rooted in Marx, Centers expends considerable effort linking his examination of subjective class to Marxist theory. The essential problem for Centers is that Marx did not develop the subjective aspects of class explicitly. Furthermore, in neglecting the subjective factor of class

consciousness (class identification) as a necessary criterion of social classes." Many of Marc's followers seem concerned only with class as an objective reality (p. 22). Indeed, According to Carr-Saunders, Marc himself treated class (best) as an aggregate, an emergent social structure. In other words, he typically used the term class in its "objective sense" as "the aggregate of persons [sharing the same] standing in the same relations toward other persons" (p. 21). In this case, Carr-Saunders is substituting the term "standing" for Marc's idea of relation to the mode of production. Carr-Saunders is concerned about class in its subjective sense. For him class is a "consciousness-of-membership-in and feeling-of-solidarity-with a group called a class . . . the possession of common interests and a common political and economic outlook" (p. 21). It is possible that Marc never intended the objectivized classism that many later theorists would advocate (see Gilman 1966). Carr-Saunders, however, advocates this interpretation. He reads Marc, incorrectly, as suggesting that class is simultaneously objective and subjective. Again, Carr-Saunders's concern with Marc is not that he failed to address subjective class, but that he did not describe it sufficiently.

Even though some like Marc, Sorokin and Zimmernian and others seem to have recognized a distinction between the terms at one place or another in their writings, the places where they have done so seem to be more exceptional than typical, and their frequent practice of using the words (for class) interchangeably has not promoted a distinction between the concepts, but confusion of them (p. 25).

Marc fails to provide a specific model for describing the behavioral characteristics of each subjective class. His tendency to use only broad

descriptions of action, such as "political mobilization" on the part of the wealthy class (Mars: 164ff-167) is not sufficiently operationalized to help us understand class identification. In other words, the psychological antecedents of "political mobilization" are unspecified by Mars. Thus, evidence of this behavior itself is poor proof that members of this group identify themselves as a class. As Centeno asserts: "There must be some way of distinguishing such internally relative and generally functional social groupings from the purely conceptual or logical categories" (p. 26). In the next section, I describe how Centeno resolves this problem.

Centeno's theory: To bridge objective and subjective class, Centeno advances what he calls an "internal group theory of class structure" (pp. 26-28). This argument states that economic conditions of society stimulate certain psychological characteristics, attitudes, and predispositions on individuals (p. 28):

A person's status and role with respect to the economic processes of society imposes upon him certain attitudes, values, and interests relating to his role and status in the political and economic sphere. It holds further that the status and role of the individual in relation to the means of the production and exchange of goods and services gives rise in turn to a consciousness of membership in some social class which shares those attitudes, values, and interests. (pp. 26-28)

In short, people's perception of their position in a structure of stratification gives rise to class-related attitudes and behavior. For example, wealthy individuals may develop conservative political ideologies that justify their position and self-interest, such as antipathy for welfare and welfare requests. Working

class people may develop fear and/or resentment of social institutions such as government if they perceive their interests being undermined. Reactions to workplace safety regulation or the advent of new free trade agreements may reinforce this fear and resentment. These attitudes and beliefs are influenced by class identification.

But how does this process occur? Centers suggests that the mechanism by which these psychological conditions manifest themselves is a process whereby individuals evaluate their quality of life and the material conditions in which they live, and then they compare these to the perceived qualities of others. This is very much akin to the notions advanced by Samuel Stouffer in his study of relative deprivation in the U.S. Army (Stouffer, 1944). Centers does not cite Weber, though Weber's treatment of this issue is superior to Marx's treatment. Recall that Weber believes the origin of class is social interaction (socialization). People regularly interact with others like themselves, and through this process they develop a shared awareness of common interests. The recognition of the commonality of interests and experiencing the emotional drive is posited as evidence these interests sponsor the formation of specific cognitive structures such as categorical membership. To Weber, this is the origin of subjective social class. Once formed, this classification is reinforced through subsequent action and interaction.

But Centers views the subjective as ultimately rooted in social structure. Thus, unlike Weber, his interest group theory assumes that class identification

status first as the result of comparisons to the immediate social environment. To fix their class identity, Canters suggests that people appraise their relative quality of life and that of their family. The most important component of this appraisal is a consideration of occupational prestige. He states "The assumption that occupation is the primary criterion of class composition has proved to be a useful one" (p. 48). Canters believes that people first develop class identification by comparing themselves to others in terms of subjectivity, compensation, and the physical demands of their occupation. Subsequent interaction serves to reinforce the identification, but in Canters's analysis, this is secondary to people's initial assessment based on comparison (p. 27).

Criticisms of the study Canters's research is the first systematic study of class identification. He introduced it in the late 1940s with assistance from the Office of Public Opinion Research at Princeton University. He used a random national sample composed of approximately 1,100 white adult males. Subjects were 21 years or older. Canters uses the term "representative" (p. 24) in describing his sample. Of course, the implicit assumption that a sample of white men is representative of the entire population perhaps reflects the convention of the time. However, his justification for not including black subjects is poorly developed and likely evidence of unfortunate experience on the researcher's part. This sampling decision is criticized in later research, which will be discussed later in the chapter. Canters addresses these issues, stating "Women were not included because in a research where stratification is the issue

variable. It is important to get definitely placed persons as far as occupation is concerned" (p. 32). He continues by noting that African Americans constitute a small minority of the population and demonstrate caste-like qualities. Thus, he believes African-American caste identification would be too difficult to measure. Subsequent research, however, would include both women and people of different races.

Centers collects data in a single phase, which lasted two weeks. He uses a structured survey instrument; almost all items are closed-ended. The survey was obtained by using face-to-face interviews.

The interview schedule includes several socio-economic variables: measures of political ideology, and other demographic variables such as age, religious affiliation, and education. He obtains information about subjects' employment history, job satisfaction, and impressions about the economy. The most important component of the survey is a question that measures respondents' subjective social class: "If you were asked to use one of these four names for your social class, which would you say you belonged in: lower working, middle, or upper class?" (p. 236). This question is Centers's dependent variable through most of his analysis. A slightly modified version of this question is still used by the Current Social Survey (COSC, 1998).

His statistical analyses of the data used. For analyses of demographics and other key variables, including subjective class, he relies on single descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation. Categorical analysis of multivariate

models is accomplished through simple multiple regression (p. 188). Though his statistical analysis is thorough, it is not complex by today's standards.

Centers's findings Because Centers's findings are so important to study class identification and the literature in particular, I will discuss them in some detail. I organize Centers's findings into two sets. The first, which includes the initial descriptive analysis previously discussed, deals with people's subjective class identification and related attitudes. The second set of findings concerns the nature of subjective class and its correlation with people's behavior.

The first significant component of Centers's analysis is a descriptive analysis of subjective class. The vast majority of his subjects identified with a specific social class. More than ninety five percent of respondents were able to place themselves in one of the four class categories. Table 2.1 reports the percentage of respondents for each class category.

Table 2.1
Frequency of Class Identification (Gentens, 1946: 77)

Responses	Percentage
Lower	3
Working	51
Middle	43
Upper	3
Don't know	1
Total	100.0
N of cases	1087

Gentens reports the distribution of class identification (see in Table 2.1) and links these to some basic socio-demographic variables, principally occupational prestige and education. About 3 percent of Gentens's sample identified as "upper class." These individuals were typically executives or owners of large companies. Many, however, were doctors, lawyers, or small-business owners. "Minorities of [the wealthy class] include certain other occupational groups as well, so that the line separating it from the middle class is blurred" (p. 215). Almost all these people were well educated, having four years or more of college.

Forty-three percent of the sample identified themselves as "middle class." Generally, this class is marked by "a fair amount of money" and "a good education" (p. 212). According to Gentens's middle class identifiers tend to

occupy positions that have some autonomy and job security. These occupations include managers, salesmen, or office workers. Many proprietors of small businesses also identified as "middle class." Like those identifying as "upper class," middle-class people tend to have higher levels of education.

Just over half of his subjects, 57 percent, identified themselves as "working class." According to Cantors, this class can be conceived as "a big broad heterogeneous class made up of people who earn their living either by manual toil, or by working for someone else, or both" (p. 213). They tended to hold skilled or semi-skilled manual jobs in urban areas, but members of this class also included farmers and sales clerks. Cantors found a number of significant divisions, such as a political divide, between this class and those above it. This divide was more pronounced than any other comparison of contiguous classes. I will discuss this divide in more detail later in the section.

Finally, "lower class" was selected by about 2 percent of the population. "Those who affiliate with [this class] are drawn mainly from among unskilled urban manual workers and from farm tenants and laborers" (p. 214). Cantors suggests that this group is the most politically radical, but he cautions that generalizations are difficult given the small size of this group.

Cantors finds that subjective social class is positively correlated with life satisfaction, such that, the higher the class identification, the higher the life satisfaction. Life satisfaction was determined using subjective measures such as, "Are you satisfied with your present job?" and "Do you think you have as

good a chance to enjoy life as you should have?" (p. 200). Members of the working class reported much less satisfaction with their quality of life than the middle class. "More people who identify with the working class are dissatisfied with their jobs, their pay, their opportunities, and their chances to enjoy life" (p. 216). The division between the middle and working class was the largest relative difference in quality of life. Members of the middle class and wealthy expressed similar levels of life satisfaction. As expected, the poor expressed the lowest life satisfaction.

But this is only the first half of Cantors's findings. To describe the meaning and significance of class identification, Cantors studies the links to more complex attitudes. His goal is to establish a connection between the identity and behavior. He looks several differences between classes in social attitudes and practices. These differences include similar levels of social attitudes, sympathy toward other classes, and political participation.

Cantors hypothesizes that people of similar status will develop and share similar attitudes about their socio-economic environment. His findings support this. They indicate that class identification is related to a number of class-based attitudes. For example, class identification is correlated with attitudes toward labor unions. The lower the class identification of subjects, the more positive their attitudes are about labor unions. "Not only do people of lower occupational groups belong to unions in substantial numbers, but they manifest distinctly more typical approval of unions than do persons in higher occupational strata" (p. 200).

In contrast, wealthy people tend to have very negative attitudes about labor unions. Members of the middle class are often split on the issue, and frequently this split is correlated with the nature of their occupations. People with higher levels of autonomy, such as in the case of attorneys, show less support for labor unions.

Subjective class was also related to subjects' attitudes toward minority groups. Middle-class individuals tended to express relatively less anti-black prejudice. "Working class people are somewhat more anti-Negro than middle class people. It is suggested that educational differences as well as economic differences may be the causal conditions for this finding" (p. 215). Both middle-class and working-class members, however, expressed a high degree of anti-Semitic prejudice. Centers offers no explanation for this finding. Class identification was correlated with attitudes about female workforce participation. "The middle class appears to be somewhat more liberal than the working class with respect to the economic freedom of women" (p. 216). Centers suggests that this difference is explained by economic self-interest. It is possible that middle-class people, many of whom were new to this class, are more likely to not violate traditional gender roles for the greater economic gain of dual income households.

The nature of subjective social class includes mis-grouping of other classes; that is, what people are as members of a social class is partly defined by what they are not. Centers finds that subjects frequently expressed negative opinions and emotions toward other classes. Both middle-class and working-

class respondents said that the upper class is "over-represented" (p. 214). Furthermore, class identification is correlated with antipathy toward industry. The lower the subjective class, the greater the likelihood respondents would express resentment of "big business" (p. 214). Though middle-class people occasionally demonstrated attitudes similar to wealthy subjects such as low antipathy toward big business their attitudes were frequently diverse. Working class and poor subjects, however, expressed significantly negative emotions toward industry.

Centers also examines the linkage between class identification and other cognitive structures. He uses a "conservative-radicalism battery" (pp. 26-28) a schedule of established measures, to assess the relationship between subjective class and political ideology. The set of questions includes ones such as "Do you think you have a good chance to get ahead at work?" and "Do you agree or disagree that America is truly a land of opportunity?" (pp. 234-235). There are also such questions as, "Do you think that working people should receive more power over government?" and "Do you agree or disagree that workers are treated fairly by their employers?" (pp. 234-235). The findings indicate a positive linear relation between class identification and ideology. The higher the class identification of subjects, the more politically conservative were their attitudes. Wealthy respondents were, by far, the most conservative, working class respondents were the most "radical." Centers explains his finding that poor people were not significantly more radical than the working class by suggesting that they are being frequently alienated from public discourse and are

evaluated in the issues. Especially, Carlsen found that the higher the subjects' class identification, the greater the likelihood of affiliation with the Republican Party. The inverse, with concomitant affiliation with the Democratic Party, was also found, though the strength of the relationship was not quite as strong as the former. Wealthy people were more likely to believe that America is truly a land of opportunity and that workers are treated fairly by their employers. Working-class people were more likely to believe that workers should receive more power in government, and that workers are not treated fairly by their employers. According to Carlsen's findings, class identification accurately predicts political ideology.

Lastly, this research finds that political participation varies positively with subjective social class. Carlsen determines political participation by examining voting and party membership. Wealthy subjects were significantly more involved in political behavior, especially voting, than other classes. Aside from membership in labor unions, working-class subjects displayed very limited political participation. Poor subjects rarely reported any political behavior; the poor were the least likely to vote (p. 66). Carlsen comments on this finding:

There is important verification here for much that has been said about classes (or strata) by older theorists: for first, not these semi-skilled and unskilled workers who constitute the most distinctly "proletarian" groups in our economic order and who at the same time show themselves to be the most disaffected with the existing system (p. 72).

Centers's observations Centers concludes his study by commenting, "A man's way of getting his livelihood dominates much of his waking life, and it is not of the forces acting upon him in the economic sphere that class consciousness has been seen to emerge" (p. 214). He argues that scholars who suggest that America is "classless" are mistaken. Americans readily identify with social classes. Moreover, there is significant and widespread class cleavage in terms of both identity and behavior. In the next section, I will discuss the most significant works in the area of class identification since Centers's work: Hodge and Triemer's *Class Identification in the United States* and Jackson and Jackson's *Class Awareness in the United States*.

Hodge and Triemer's Class Identification in the United States

In 1998, Robert Hodge and Donald J. Triemer noted that a significant amount of time had passed since Centers's study. They proposed that the transformation of the economy in post-war America likely changed the patterns of class identification. To test this assertion, they replicated Centers's original study.

Hodge and Triemer's theory The researchers propose a reexamination of Centers's findings. They do not contest or add to Centers's theoretical work nor do they offer any substantial new theoretical structure. The only significant departure from Centers's study is their hypothesis that significant change in the

American economic structure triggered substantial change in the patterns of class stratification. They explain:

In the intervening period [since Gans's study] real incomes have continued to rise, the secular trend toward higher levels of educational attainment have been perpetuated, and consumer goods once available to white collar employees have become standard items of working class households. [1984: 530]

The motivation for this dissertation follows a similar logic: that changes in economic conditions affect how class identification. I will discuss this issue later in this chapter. Hodge and Trieman's hypothesis also has methodological implications.

Hodge and Trieman's method The researchers suggest that Gans's original typology should be expanded to include a "new" class: the upper-middle class. "In view of the upward trend in the distribution of real income and educational attainment, the upper-middle class was added to the standard system" (p. 536).

Hodge and Trieman draw a national area-probability sample. This sample yielded 829 adults. Women and minorities were included in this study, but the researchers offer no comment on this significant innovation. Except for the modification of the subjective class measure, the researchers used an interview schedule identical to Gans's interview schedule. As with Gans, they also used face-to-face interviews. The data were analyzed with cross-tabulation, multiple regression, and analysis of variance.

Hodge and Tremm's findings: Hodge and Tremm's found support for their initial hypothesis: the number of people identifying with the working class declined from Cantors's study by 18 percent (p. 838). Further, a meaningful proportion of the population (18.8 percent) identified as "upper-middle" class. This change occurred without a substantial decline in the percentage of people identifying as "upper class." Assuming this comparison to Cantor's findings is valid, and I believe that it is, the finding suggests that the growth of the upper-middle class is the result of an upward trend in class identification. There is also a significant decline in the proportion of subjects identifying as "working class." Table 2.2 reports the percentage of class identification for all subjects.

Table 2.2
Frequency of Class Identification (Hodge and Tremm, 1987: 838)

Response	Percentage
Lower	2.5
Working	54.4
Middle	44.0
Upper-Middle	18.8
Upper	2.5
Don't know	0.5
Total	100.0
N of cases	929

Hodge and Treiman do not report separate distributions of subjective class for men and women. They examine the sources of subjective class and find that education, family income, and the main earner's occupation independently contribute to class identification (p. 527). However, the correlations between these variables and subjective class are weaker than those found by Centers. They find that the main earner's occupation was the most significant of the three variables, and its correlation coefficient (.3764) is twice as large as the other variables.

The researchers note that the combination of these variables explains only about one-fifth of the total variance (R -squared = .195) in class identification (p. 527). It is an attempt to better describe the sources of class identification. Hodge and Treiman measure the impact of social contacts. Centers gathered data on social contacts but did not explore this issue in his analysis. Using their data (derived from Centers's original interview schedule), Hodge and Treiman developed a dummy variable measuring the class of social contacts. They accomplished this by coding the occupational groups of a subject's friends, neighbors, and relatives as "high status" or "low status" (p. 545). Subjects received one point for each type of contact (friend, neighbor, or family member) they had who was either low class or high class. Thus, if a subject's parents were doctors, but his friends were laborers, that subject scores high status contact = 2, low status contact = 1. Cross-tabulation of the two scores suggests a strong relationship between social contacts and class identification. "The

fraction of respondents identifying with the upper or middle class increases as high status contacts become more numerous and declines as low status contacts increase" (p. 540). The multiple partial correlation of these new variables (.244) further suggests that "the net effects of low and high status contacts on class identification are larger than those of education and family income, and as large as that of the main source's occupation" (pp. 545-547).

Hodge and Treiman's conclusions. As with Cantors, Hodge and Treiman conclude that class identification is widespread in the United States. They also find that class identification is correlated with "objective" measures of class including income, education, and occupational prestige. They conclude that Americans are aware of class and share a common understanding of the characteristics that define classes.

Hodge and Treiman conclude that the expansion of wealth and education has produced changes in the structure of American class identification. Patterns of class identification shifted upward in the interval between Cantors's study conducted in 1945 and his research done in 1967. They find that fewer people feel they belong to the working class, and they note that the middle class outnumbered the working class. This pattern varies importantly from Cantors's findings. As further evidence, they note that many subjects believed that they occupy a place between middle class and upper class, and the upper-middle class is now a significant and lasting category of class identification in the United States.

Finally, Hodja and Treiman assert that social contacts, such as friends and neighbors, significantly contribute to one's subjective class. "A person's class identification depends as much on who he knows as on where he is in the class structure" (p. 142). Though I question the causal ordering of this finding, it integrates well with Weber's ideas about identity formation. Weber believes that individuals develop their identity from the immediate social environment, especially from relationships that are deeply rooted in culture. The sources of peer groups and the settings in which peer groups are formed are certainly embedded in culture. But it is equally plausible to assume that subjective class is more causally linked to peer group composition than the suggestion that peer-affiliated people's subjective class. Hodja and Treiman's final conclusion is intriguing, but it extends too far beyond their available data.

Jackson and Jackson's *Class Awareness in the United States*

A more recent empirical work is Mary Jackson and Robert Jackson's *Class Awareness in the United States* (1983). Also inspired by Center's study, Jackson and Jackson attempted to further clarify the patterns and implications of class identification in the United States. They cite Hodja and Treiman only peripherally, and unlike these previous researchers, Jackson and Jackson develop their own interview schedule (rather than reproducing Center's interview schedule).

Jackson and Jackson's theory. While Centers previously roots his research in Marx, Jackson and Jackson favor a Weberian approach. Ultimately, both Centers and Jackson and Jackson conceptualize classes in the same way, as specific and widely recognized interest groups. But where Marxize classes are solely the product of relationships to production, Jackson and Jackson's Weberian approach views subjective class as the product of market relations and other culturally based authority structures, such as race or religion. Therefore, cultural view of class identity suggests that Centers's effort to elaborate the subjective implications of Marxian theory was unnecessary. He overlooks the connection to Weber. "The legacy of Weber's dispute with Marx is a false distinction between class as something simple and clearly defined, and social stratification as a multi-dimensional and complicated phenomenon" (p. 2). As with objective forms of stratification, class identification is multifaceted.

But even though Jackson and Jackson stress their alignment with Weber instead of Marx, they still acknowledge the usefulness of Centers's theory. Though they reject its roots, they embrace Centers's interest group theory as the best explanation of how class identification occurs. They write, "Our view of classes as a graded series of status groups defined by economic interests follows the same vein of thought as that outlined by Centers" (p. 2).

Like Centers, Jackson and Jackson confront possible objections about class as a dominant field of identity. They argue that if ethnicity is widely accepted by sociologists as being "identity," so then should class.

Like ethnic groups, these communities are loosely bounded and are based on multiple interrelated criteria. For classes, these involve configurations of economic and derivative cultural factors. (Economic factors that enter the configuration [of class identification] include level of education, occupational prestige, job skill, seniority, autonomy and authority, earned income and capital assets. These interrelated economic factors, in turn, produce variable life styles that are expressed in patterns of consumption and cultural values. (pp. 7-8)

Through this assertion, Jenkins and Jackson clarify Centers's interest in group theory. Centers, employing Marxian theory, suggests that subjective classes were fleeting or long-term patterns of identity. But if class identification is varied solely in relationship to production, these patterns of identity are then subject to the same lability as economic. This sort of lability would make long-term patterns less likely. But if class identification is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by cultural processes, such as ethnicity, as well as market relations, then the notion of long-term patterns in class identification becomes more plausible.

Jenkins and Jackson's method Jenkins and Jackson conducted their survey with assistance from the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. Their research began in the fall of 1975. They used a national, multi-stage probability sample of all non-institutionalized adults, yielding 1,514 subjects (p. 11). Importantly, their sample included men and women, as well as blacks and whites. They gathered their data using face-to-face interviews. They included items measuring socioeconomic variables, such as household income, education, and occupation. Using data from these variables, subjects were

assigned Duncan Socioeconomic Index scores. The researchers also included measures of political ideology and behavior, such as political party affiliation and attitudes about welfare. Jackson and Jackson included items measuring subjects' "affiliative proclivities" (p. 103). These questions measure peer group composition and interaction. This data allowed Jackson and Jackson to test the relationship between disidentification and peer group composition more directly than Hodge and Trieman did. They also included measurement of other behavior speculatively related to subjective class, such as choice of housing. Their operationalization of class identification was similar to Hodge and Trieman's read: "People talk about social classes such as poor, the working class, the middle class, the upper middle class, and the upper class. Which of these classes would you say you belong to?" (p. 14). There are two significant differences between this measure and the one used by Centers. The first is the use of the term "poor" instead of lower class. The researchers believe that this term is more widely embraced and possibly less stigmatized. The second is the inclusion of an "upper-middle" class. Unlike Hodge and Trieman, Jackson and Jackson offer very little justification for the inclusion of the upper-middle-class option, except that by doing so the "middle" class is placed in the true center of the distribution of possible responses. They speculate that this will increase the "clarity of the stimulus" and reduce non-response (p. 18).

Jackson and Jackson's findings: The researchers were able to make several significant findings, many confirmed those findings of Centers and Hodge

and Trisman. First, they found that people are able to readily identify and define their social class. The researchers found that individuals were able to "accurately" place themselves into established class categories. This finding was determined by comparing individual's objective class, measured by Duncan Socio-economic Index scores, with their subjective class. Table 2.3 reports the percentage distribution of class identification found by Jackman and Jackman. Note the relative similarity between these findings and Carstairs's findings and the lower frequency of upper-middle class respondents compared with Hodge and Trisman's findings.

Table 2.3
Percentage of Class Identification (Jackman and Jackman, 1965-66)

Response	Percentage
Lower	7.6
Working	35.6
Middle	43.3
Upper-Middle	6.2
Upper	1.0
Don't know	0.6
Other*	2.9
Total	100.0
N of cases	1814

* Includes identification with two classes (such as, "poor and working") and irrelevant responses

Men and women generally have similar rates of identification with classes (p. 16). The only substantial difference is the rate of identification with poverty. Women were nearly twice as likely to identify as poor (9.2 percent) compared to men (5.4 percent).

Jackson and Jenkins next examined the sources of subjective class. Paramount among these is nuclear family of origin. Family of origin is an important source of class identification for both men and women. Family is a greater source of class identification than occupational status or education, both important contributors themselves. Significant social contacts outside of the family were found to have very little influence of subjective class. In general, Jackson and Jenkins find that women's identification is more tied to family of origin than men's identification. "The coefficient for origin family class is 15% higher among women than among men" (p. 157). The researchers also suggest that women can derive a significant proportion of subjective class from sources other than their husbands, but men do not (p. 217). These findings stimulated much subsequent research, I will discuss this literature in the section on contemporary research.

Third, the researchers sought to measure the affective bond people have to class. According to the Weberian status group theory which Jackson and Jenkins use to explain subjective class, classes are "emotionally bounded" or "emotionally exclusive" (p. 44). In other words, people should express more positive emotions toward their own class, less positive, or possibly negative,

emotions toward other classes. The researchers found that subjects express emotional distance from classes higher and lower than their own. Contrary to earlier conclusions, however, Jackman and Jankin do not find specific subgrouping or "us versus them" attitudes. Subjects tended to relate only generally toward other classes, and gradients in emotional distance are slight from one class to another. The emotional distance expressed by the working class toward the post is very slight, for example. Jackman and Jackman conclude that people do not weigh all aspects of their socioeconomic identity equally. Race, for example, has a significant influence on class identity, especially for the portion of identity that is derived from comparisons to perceived structures of inequality (p. 100). For whites, this emotional attachment is as strong as racial bonds. Table 3.4 reports this study's findings for class identification by race.

Table 2.4
Percentage of Class Identification by Race or Ethnic Group (Jedrejman and
Jedrejman, 1983: 18)

Response	White	Black	Other ^a
Lower	4.8	37.7	14.1
Working	35.8	47.8	38.1
Middle	40.4	22.1	32.8
Upper-Middle	9.2	1.8	7.8
Upper	1.8	1.8	8.0
Don't know	1.3	2.8	3.1
Other ^b	1.8	3.1	1.8
N of Cases	1648	105	64

^a Includes Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans

^b Includes identification with two classes (such as, "poor and working") and irrelevant responses

For blacks, class bonds are not as strong as racial ones, except among poor blacks. For example, 48 percent of black middle-class subjects reported greater emotional connection to their race, as opposed to their class (p. 150). Only 4.7 percent of these subjects reported greater emotional affinity for their class. Poor blacks, however, express equal rates of emotional affinity to their class and race, 17.3 percent and 17.3 percent, respectively. The finding suggests that "subordinate statuses are more personally compelling than dominant ones" (p. 218). Race is therefore the chief alternative to class as a category of subjective identification in the United States.

Jackson and Jackson are also concerned about behavioral implications of subjective class. Though the study finds that peers and other social contacts do not contribute significantly to class identification, this identification coincided with the class composition of social networks. There is a marked preference for association with one's own class exclusively among all classes except the poor (p. 218). Generally, data indicated that people prefer to marry close to their own class. But on closer inspection, the relationship between class identification and preference of mate's class is better described as inverse: the lower the class, the greater the desire for higher class mates (p. 182).

Similarly, class identity has a strong influence on people's choice of housing, both form and location. "There is a marked tendency toward preference for contact with one's own social class. As anticipated, this pattern is more pronounced with neighborhood preferences" (p. 154-155). Patterns were found in the type of houses people wanted. Visualizer subjects wanted to live in larger homes; working-class subjects were more likely to rent. Inert subjects reported living in same-class neighborhoods. Jackson and Jackson also find evidence supporting Hodge and Freeman's (1962) suggestion that peer contacts influence subjective class. "Indeed, the association between the status of one's friends and one's own status is as strong as the association among one's own status components themselves" (1963:218). The correlation between subjective class and peer class is high for both blacks and whites.

One of Jackman and Jackman's most interesting findings deals with political attitudes, knowledge, and ideology. There was a strong negative relationship between class and support for social welfare policies. The lower the class, the greater the support for income assistance. However, "it is evident that among the working class there is somewhat more support for guaranteed employment than for a guaranteed minimum income" (p. 302).

There is no significant relationship between class identification and desire for more elaborate redistributive social policies, for example subsidies for displaced workers. This finding suggests that people are frequently ineffective in linking complicated aspects of their own economic self-interest with political processes. In sum, Jackman and Jackman find that as political issues become more complex, their link to class identification declines.

To further explore the relationship between class identification and ideology, Jackman and Jackman look at subjects' attitudes about income inequality and social mobility. They find no consistent pattern between class identification and desire for greater income equality (p. 305). All classes tend to support the current levels of income inequality. Even the poor tend to support current wage and salary structures, though less frequently than other classes. This finding does not suggest that people are satisfied with their own class positions, but rather they endorse the compensation received by most occupations as fair or appropriate. The researchers attempt to elaborate on this relationship by examining subjects' attitudes about social mobility. More

specifically, they measured subjects' expectations for mobility as described by "ability," "achievement," and "equity."

These categories capture three different kinds of norms. References to ability fit it with a Robert Gennepian line of reasoning that all people are not equal and that inequality thus reflects a "natural" order. References to achievement have more universalistic connotations, and for this reason they provide a justification of inequality that is singularly appropriate for capitalist domination. Egalitarian norms are more directly challenging to the status quo. (p. 205)

Jackson and Jackson find that the distribution of peoples' attitudes about social mobility is consistent with their feelings about income inequality. "About 85 percent of all mentioned achievement-related factors are grounds for inequality" (p. 205). That is, people tend to explain the structure of social stratification in America as the result of differences in ability. Thus Jackson and Jackson conclude that most Americans, regardless of class, believe that the current class structure and income structure includes opportunity for upward mobility and is therefore acceptable. The irony of this finding is, however, that most people still consider their own class as the result of multiple problems, many of which are ascribed (family of origin, race, and so forth).

Jackson and Jackson's conclusions. Jackson and Jackson verify many of Gennep and Hodge and Freeman's initial findings. Americans, both men and women, readily classify with known social classes. The researchers find that race, which Gennep did not study, mediates class identification for minority group

members. Even so, most still include class as an important part of their social self.

There are multiple sources of subjective class, but among these sources family of origin is paramount. Occupation and education are also important, but peer groups seem to have little influence on class identification. These are important conclusions, and they are tested later in this dissertation.

Jackman and Jackman conclude that there are significant social and political implications of class identification. Class identity predicts the composition of people's peer-groups, what type of neighborhood they choose and what class they marry. Class identification is also related to people's political ideology. As Carder finds, the higher the people's class, the more conservative is their ideology. This relationship, however, appears only when using simple measures, such as support for welfare. The researchers conclude that differences in class identification

Do not split our effectively either into issues that are more functionally redistributive or into issues that require a more detailed understanding of redistributive policies. This reflects the fact that organized political life does little to provide a forum for the debate of class issues. As a result, there is no ready way that class issues can be given unambiguous external expression, and the public is left largely untutored in the politics of class. (p.218)

In the next section, I will discuss other recent investigations of class identification. Some of these investigations predate Jackman and Jackman's

work by a few years. All are more narrowly focused on class identification in families and typically on the source of subjective class among married women.

Contemporary Explorations of Class Identification in Families

Though Gentens and Jackman and Jackman found a variety of interesting patterns, most of the contemporary research in this area concerns the class identification of married women. This issue is sponsored by a debate over the attribution of employed married women's sources of subjective class. At issue is whether women borrow status from their husbands or share it, defining their identity based on additional conditions independent of their husband's status.

Edelman and Kosloski's study: An early example of this line of research is Edelman and Kosloski's study (1974). These researchers used data from the 1972 General Social Survey to assess class identification among employed married women. Edelman and Kosloski included the educational and occupational status of the respondent, their spouse, and the respondent's father. The findings of the study indicate that employed women still tend to borrow status from their husbands. This finding is consistent with the conclusions made by Jackman and Jackman.

Ritter and Hargens's study: Ritter and Hargens (1979) conducted a multi-year study using pooled data from election studies conducted by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center. These data also included a number of socioeconomic variables and Gentens's question. Ritter and Hargens found that

women's occupational status is at least a strong an influence on their identity as their husband's status.

Hiller and Philbin's study. Hiller and Philbin (1979) employed a similar technique using data from the 1973-1979 General Social Survey. This study examined the effect of occupational prestige scores of both spouses on working wives' subjective social class. Hiller and Philbin did not pool the data, which allowed them to test reliability of their model and the data. They found that 1973 data indicate a strong and exclusive effect of husbands' occupational prestige but that all other years showed that both husbands' status and wives' status independently contribute to wives' status. The researchers reviewed the 1972 data and found that the number of married women in that year's sample was very low. Hiller and Philbin conclude that the finding for 1972 was flawed and that status among working-wives is shared.

Van Velsor and Beehley's study. Van Velsor and Beehley (1979) replicated the work of both Felson and Kline and Riter and Hargens. They used pooled data from the 1976-1978 General Social Survey (GSS). This study used a model similar to the previous studies, adding mother's education, mother's occupation, and race of respondent. Van Velsor and Beehley's findings confirmed those of Felson and Kline and also Jackman and Jackman. As Riter and Hargens suggest, Van Velsor and Beehley found that women include their own occupational prestige when considering class identity. This finding supports the status-sharing hypothesis.

Goldthorpe's critique. In 1993, however, Goldthorpe published an essay defending the traditional view on class identification in the family. In this largely theoretical essay, he argues that families are a single, unified socioeconomic unit. The head of the household, as the primary source of income, determines class location. Since domestic responsibilities and income inequality restrict women's ability to contribute to family class, the husband's class is the only significant source of subjective class within families. In a later essay, Goldthorpe (1994) implies that the empirical evidence supporting shared subjective class among married women is overstated. Though the analysis is cautious, Goldthorpe succeeds in further invigorating this line of inquiry.

Beehley and Cochran's elaboration. Beehley and Cochran (1998) addresses the question of married women's gender roles and their effect on class identification, an issue less thoroughly addressed by others. Using the pooled data from the 1974-1980 General Social Survey, Beehley and Cochran tested the status-borrowing and status-sharing hypotheses. Their findings suggest that the sources of married women's class identification depend on the gender role norms of their household. The more liberal the household gender norms, the less likely married women were to rely exclusively on their husbands for subjective class. This research helped to clarify, though not necessarily resolve, the decade-old debate.

Simmons, Clark, and Jackson's study. Simmons, Clark, and Jackson (1998) also used G-S-S data and found that class identification is sex-specific:

and influenced by occupational characteristics. Regression analyses reveal that men's identification is associated with manual and non-manual work types, and degree of supervision. Women's identification, however, is more closely associated with participation in traditionally male occupations. In other words, participation in traditionally male occupations is associated with higher identification. Women's identification is also positively related to self-employment and negatively with union membership.

Baxter's international study. Using data from the Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness, Baxter (1994) compared the sources of working women's subjective class in the United States, Sweden, Norway, and Australia. Baxter's findings support the status-borrowing model of women's subjective class in all four countries. She states, "Variations at the societal level in women's levels of economic independence, state support for women's employment, and household structure do not affect the relationship between class location and subjective class identification" (1994: 229). She concludes that women's increasing socioeconomic independence has not yet overcome their traditional psychological reliance on husbands.

Baxter and the role of workplace characteristics. Baxter (1994) examined the effect of job and workplace characteristics on working women's subjective class. She finds that office automation, task control, and other organizational characteristics are important sources of subjective class. The higher the autonomy and intrinsic job rewards subjects feel, the more likely they were to

identify as 'middle class'. Smaller office size and length of time employed was also related to higher subjective class. However, greater use of video display terminals including computers was associated with working-class identification. Significantly, this study is one of the first attempts at measuring intermarriage (post-industrial) work conditions on class identification. Inclusion of these types of variables enhances our understanding of class identification in the same way as Beeghly and Cochran's consideration of domestic roles.

David and Robinson's study of the Status Borrowing Debate Most recently, Davis and Robinson (1998) reexamined class identification in marriage using pooled GSS data from 1974 to 1994. The significant innovation in this research is a dynamic model testing not only of the impact of husband's status on wives' subjective class but also the contribution of wives to husband's identity. Davis and Robinson's findings indicate an evolution over the last two decades. The researchers note that early in the study period there was some evidence for the status-borrowing hypothesis, but that this evidence disappeared. The study finds that employed women now consider their own characteristics 'equally' (1988-1993) with their husbands' characteristics. Davis and Robinson also find that husbands are increasingly considering their wives' characteristics. Though men still are overwhelmingly conscious of their own statuses, the inclusion of wives' characteristics represents significant variation for the status-sharing hypothesis.

Theoretical Framework and Summary

In this section I will summarize the theoretical approach of this dissertation. I will also relate my original research questions as discussed in Chapter One with the aim of linking them to the literature. I will indicate and discuss the empirical works that influence my hypotheses. I place the roots of this study in the broad theoretical traditions of Marx and, more prominently, Weber. Marx linked socioeconomic status, a structural phenomenon, to life choices. He suggested that awareness of class and concomitant alienation are germinal to eliminating inequality. However, he contends that the existence is neither conscious nor automatic. This study incorporates Marx's assumption that socioeconomic status is key to life chances, but it departs from his labor assumption. I believe that subjective class is widespread and accurate in the United States today.

Several researchers (Jackman and Jackman, 1983; Davis and Robinson, 1988) started to employ Weber's ideas as an alternative to Marx. Weber (1984) disagreed with Marx's singular preoccupation with stable, objective class as the cause of inequality. Weber argues that inequality is the product of overlapping authority structures. This study assumes that subjective class is rooted in a psychological affiliation with Weberian status groups.

The operationalization of class identification is borrowed from Censur (1988). Class identity varies in four distinct categories: lower working, middle, and upper class. As with Hatge and Treiman (1988) and Jackman and Jackman

[1953] the measure I intend to use substitutes the term "poor" for "lower" class, as I believe it is a more descriptive term and more salient in contemporary public discourse.

As discussed in Chapter One, items and Murphy (1955) help to operationalize class identification. Using a heuristic model, they elaborate on how individuals' subjective perceptions of class vary. They also discuss the probable implications of this identification. The center of the continuum is characterized by identification with discrete social classes, and in some cases, an articulated awareness of shared values/interests. This study borrows items and Murphy's assumption that people are able to identify with discrete social classes and that this identification frequently entails a specific awareness of how class constrains choice. This study accepts the assumption that the end points of the continuum are rare. This description explains gradations of awareness between broad or unapplied self-categorization and class-based political action rooted in perceived collective interest.

The specific hypotheses of this study are influenced most by the work of Cantril (1946), Jackman and Jackman (1973), and Goughley and Cochrane (1984).¹¹ Cantril and Jackman and Jackman were concerned with measuring behavioral implications of class identification and not simply the patterns of identification. The link between class identification and behavior is key to the practical significance of the investigative tradition. Jackman and Jackman's study included a consideration of race, which is rare even in subsequent

research. There is no clear explanation for researchers' tendency to omit race in their analyses. I propose that the use of race as a control in each step of this analysis is a meaningful and uncommon contribution to the literature.

This dissertation is further inspired by Beehley and Cochran's (1988) exploration of subjective class in families. Their research discusses the impact of changing gender roles within families on class identification. This dissertation is an attempt to reproduce the significant findings of these two works in contemporary, post-industrial United States.

The first research question asked was: "What factors contribute to class identification?" The preponderance of empirical research, from Gans to Jackson and Jackson, suggests that family of origin class is a more powerful predictor of class identification than any other single characteristic. Back of these researchers, in describing the need to examine sources of subjective class, refers to the common contention that family of origin is dominating in relative significance. They note the tendency of other researchers/theorists to emphasize other variables, such as occupational status. I will test for the continued significance of family as a source of subjective class. My first question formally stated as a hypothesis is:

- 1) Family of origin class is a more powerful predictor of class identification than any other single characteristic.

Jackson and Jackson found that this relationship is even stronger for African Americans. I propose to control for race and suggest the following addendum to my first question:

- 1A) Family of origin is more significant a predictor of class identification for African Americans compared with whites.

My second question was: "Does class identity influence sociopolitical characteristics, such as voting, party affiliation, or ideology?" Both Canters and Jackson and Jackson suggest that class identification is highly correlated with political attitudes and behavior. To determine if this pattern continues, I will test the following hypothesis:

- 2) The higher the class identity, the more conservative the political ideology.

As Jackson and Jackson's findings suggest, racial and political attitudes vary significantly by race. I will seek to measure this variance,

- 3A) The relationship is weaker for African Americans compared to whites.

Lastly, I would like to examine whether married, employed women borrow or share their identity with their husbands. Ringblay and Geddes (1988) found that wives' gender roles influence the spouses' self-identification. Using more recent data and different measures, I seek to replicate this research by testing the hypotheses listed below. Jackson and Jackson's research suggests that

this relationship is weaker for African Americans. My third set of research questions are:

- 3) When considering their class identity, married women tend to borrow rather than share class identity with their husbands.
- 34) The more traditional a wife's gender roles, the more likely she is to borrow her subjective class from her husband.
- 35) The relationship between gender roles and wives' subjective class is weaker for African Americans compared to whites.

In Chapter Three, I will discuss the methodology of this dissertation. The measures used to represent these concepts are described. I will include a description of the data, my sample, and the techniques I will use to test these hypotheses.

FOOTNOTES

1. Material in the next three paragraphs paraphrases material in *Daugherty* (3080-8-18). The material is used with permission of the author.

2. Hodge and Tinsman's analysis does not differ sufficiently enough from Corbett's analysis to include it as one of the more important influences on this dissertation. I do not suggest, however, that Hodge and Tinsman's research is unimportant.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I describe the research methodology used in this dissertation. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first discusses the data that will be used in this dissertation. In the second, I describe the way these variables are entered into logistic models to test the three sets of hypotheses. Lastly, the techniques used to analyze these data are discussed.

Data

In this section, I describe the data and the sampling techniques from which they were derived. Then I will discuss the measures that I selected to test my research questions. I will deal with related issues of data availability and validity where needed.

Data Source and Sample

General social survey This study uses data from the National Opinion Research Center's General Social Survey. The General Social Survey (GSS) is a multipurpose survey of American adults by household. Its goal is to measure important attitudes, behaviors, and socio-demographic patterns in America. Some examples of variables included in the survey are political party

membership, attitudes about race and housing status. This study is conducted annually through funding shortages cancelled surveys in 1979, 1981, and 1982 (National Opinion Research Center 1989a). The first GSS study took place in 1972.

Data for this dissertation are extracted from the 1988 cumulative data file "The 1972-1988 merged data file contains 23 studies, 21 national cross-sections and two samples of blacks in 1962 and 1987. This file has 28,394 respondents and over 3,700 variables" (NORC 1988c).

I chose to use the GSS in this dissertation for a number of reasons. First, the GSS was designed to promote replication of research (NORC 1988a). The inclusion of Gensens original class identification measure allows me to loosely connect my findings to the line of literature on class identification begun by Gensens. Secondly, the GSS has an abundance of well-designed attitudinal variables, especially sociopolitical variables, which mirror the independent variables used by Gensens and Jackson and Jackson. This fact permits investigation of some of the more interesting findings in Gensens and Jackson and Jackson's work. Lastly, at this time, the 1988 cumulative data file is publicly accessible. The GSS is an richest source of pertinent socio-demographic and attitudinal data available at no cost.

Sample During the past several decades, the GSS has employed a variety of sampling techniques. The initial method used in 1972, 1973, and 1974 was a modified probability method utilizing block quotas. Due to an

increase in funding, the designers were able to use a mixed, two-sample method in 1973 - 1979. The number of sample selections in the "transitional" design were divided equally between a block quota method (as employed in earlier studies) and a full probability design (NCRC, 1986a). Since 1979, the GSS has employed a stratified, multistage area probability sample of household clusters in the United States (NCRC, 1986a).

There are four stages to the sample selection. The first stage selects the primary sampling units (PSUs). This original parameter is composed of all Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) and all non-metropolitan counties. The selection of primary sampling units follows the method of probabilities proportional to size of population. Furthermore, primary sampling units are stratified by average age, race, and region. Samples before 1974 exclude Alaska and Hawaii. The second stage selects block groups (BG). Average income and race are used to stratify these block groups. As with the PSUs, stratified block groups are selected with probability proportional to size. The third stage selects sample blocks. In rural areas, where block data are unavailable, sample blocks were obtained by field counting (NCRC, 1986a). The final stage of sampling is a quota method within the block units. One sample unit is selected for every fifty dwelling units in the sample block. The interviewer begins with the dwelling unit in the northwest corner of the block and proceeds in a predetermined direction until a representative sample of male and female subjects is achieved.

The use of quota samples at the block level is "substantially less than the cost of a full probability sample of the same size" (POPC, 1999c). However, a greater chance of sample bias exists due to non-response error, which is not controlled in quota sampling. Generally, QSS samples are similar to distributions reported in the Census and other authoritative data sets (POPC, 1999c).

Variables and Measures

In this section, I will describe the QSS measures used to represent the variables in the hypotheses. I divide this description into four parts, a description of class identification (the dependent variable), socio-demographic variables, sociopolitical variables, and variables for marital status and gender roles. Though I discuss these variables in four categories, many are used throughout the analysis. Race, for example, is applied as a control in all three sets of questions.

Class identification—The dependent variable for this dissertation is class identification. The QSS uses a item similar to the one first developed by Gensini (1949). The question (item #110) reads "If you were asked to use one of four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: the lower class, the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?" (POPC, 1999c). This measure is scored as an ascending ordinal variable, such that lower class is scored as 1, working class as 2, middle class as 3, and upper class as 4. Data for "don't know" and "there are no classes" responses are also recorded. The

variable's mnemonic is CLASS. A five-range class identification variable (CLASSINT) was used in 1973 that included "upper-middle class" as an option. Due to the limited data for the five-range measure, this dissertation will use the four-range version.

As with previous studies, the distribution of class identification in the GSS is heavily skewed toward the center categories, working class and middle class. To facilitate a more straightforward interpretation of the logistic models, the dependent variable is recoded into a dichotomous dummy. Poor class and working class are equal to 0 ("lower class") and middle class and upper class are equal to 1 ("higher class").

Socio-demographics. This dissertation examines the relationship between class identification and a number of common socio-demographic variables including race, sex, and marital status. These factors are used to investigate class identification and attitudinal variables. Typically, interviewers record race without soliciting responses from subjects. If in doubt, the interviewer instructs about the interview to ask, "What race do you consider yourself?" White subjects are coded 1, African-American subjects are coded 2, and all others are coded 3. Because the third response category includes a wide range of racial and ethnic identities, many of which do not parallel each other in a socio-economic sense (Jodanis, 1998), I limited only African-American and white subjects. Whites are recoded 0 and African American are recoded 1 for this study.

The GSS measure for sex codes males as 1 and females as 2 which I recode 0 and 1, respectively. The third set of questions in this dissertation requires a subsample of married women. This is obtained by utilizing the GSS marital status measure. This measure asks "Are you currently married, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?" Married is scored as 1, widowed as 2, divorced as 3, separated as 4, never married as 5. Women scoring 1 on this measure (married) are included in the subsample.

Respondents are handed a card and asked to indicate their income range. Income is measured in ranges of increasing proportion. Frequencies in the lower income cells are relatively low and variance between these income levels is not substantively significant. This study will recode income response ranges 1 through 7 as "1 or less." Frequencies for each cell are reported in Table 2.1

Table 3.1
Frequency of Responses for Income (2002-1998)

Response	Score	Frequency
Under \$1,000	01	38
\$1,000 to \$2,999	02	36
\$3,000 to \$4,999	03	19
\$5,000 to \$9,999	04	31
\$10,000 to \$14,999	05	43
\$15,000 to \$19,999	06	42
\$20,000 to \$24,999	07	31
\$25,000 to \$29,999	08	77
\$30,000 to \$39,999	09	119
\$40,000 to \$49,999	10	124
\$50,000 to \$59,999	11	104
\$60,000 to \$69,999	12	82
\$70,000 to \$79,999	13	106
\$80,000 to \$94,999	14	128
\$95,000 to \$199,999	15	187
\$200,000 to \$249,999	16	218
\$250,000 to \$399,999	17	306
\$400,000 to \$499,999	18	258
\$500,000 to \$999,999	19	231
\$1,000,000 to \$14,999,999	20	208
\$15,000,000 or over	21	328
Refused	22	687
Don't know	98	117
No answer	99	36
Not applicable	99	8

Respondents' education is measured as an ascending ordinal variable as well. Subjects are scored 1 for every grade completed, with years of college scored as additional grades. As with income, frequencies in low education cells are low. Scores between 0 ("no schooling") and 7 ("seventh grade") are rounded

at T (seventy or less years of education). All the previously discussed sociodemographic variables were used in each GSS year. These measures are widely accepted by sociologists as valid, and they tend to have relatively limited missing data or non-response error.

The occupational prestige of respondents and their relatives are coded using the two-digit 1980 GSS/MOPC prestige score developed by Rukio Nakao and Judith Treas (1980). This scale was adapted from the U.S. Bureau of the Census three-digit occupation and industry codes for 1980. It was revised shortly after its initial development to include more differentiation in service occupations (Nakao, Rukio, and Treas, 1990). Sample occupational prestige scores include college professors 74, executive administration 70, secretaries 46, and children 28. Prior to 1980, research on the link between subjects' class identification and the identification of their family members required multiple variables. For example, researchers had to approximate the class of parents or spouses by using respondents' estimates of their family members' income, education, and occupation (see Bourdieu and Cosman, 1988). The use of 1980 GSS/MOPC prestige scores provides a single measure for comparisons of respondents' socioeconomic status with spouses and other relatives.

Sociopolitical variables. The dissertation tests the relationship between class identification and political ideology. Political party affiliation is used as an indicator of political ideology. This variable is used as a measure of political values and will permit comparisons to previous research, specifically Carls and

Jackman and Jackman's findings. The GSS measures political party affiliation by asking "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or what?" (NCRC, 1995c). Responses are coded as follows: 0 for Strong Democrat; 1 for not very strong Democrat; 2 for Independent close to Democrat; 3 for Independent; 4 for Independent close to Republican; 5 for Not very strong Republican; 6 for Strong Republican; 7 for no response. However, since "Independent" is not a true middle-range response, that is, it does not necessarily indicate a true neutral political ideology, these cases are recoded in this analysis. Further, since the distinction between strong, not strong and near independent is not operationalized by the GSS, these cases are recoded into a dichotomous dummy variable. More importantly, this recoding will simplify interpretation of the model. All Democratic classifications are recoded as 0 and all Republican responses are coded as 1.

Political party identification, in itself, is a good measure of political ideology, but it is not a perfect one. An estimation of political ideology is improved by the addition of an attitudinal measure. Previous researchers (for example, Cantril, 1948 and Jackman and Jackman, 1983) found a relationship between class identification and attitudes about socioeconomic equality. The relationship included in this dissertation. The GSS employs an item measuring subjects' attitudes toward the government's role in reducing inequality. This statement reads:

Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor—perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing the income difference between the rich and the poor. (ICPSR, 1988)

Responses are coded using a seven-range Likert scale, where 1 equals strongly agree and 7 equals strongly disagree. This variable permits speculation about the relationship between class identification and mass street values toward equality and the role of government. Recall that Castells suggests that one of the more important routines of class identification is its relationship to political radicalism (1983: 1–15). Note, however, that this measure was included only on two of the three ballots—that is, one-third of the subjects were not asked this question. Thus, using this item reduces the study sample by 33% cases. Nonetheless, the remaining sample is large enough for meaningful statistical analysis.¹ A descriptive analysis is performed on test cases to determine if any significant socio-demographic patterns exist among those cases.

Marriage and gender role attitudes Sex and marital status are described previously in the discussion of socio-demographic variables. One of the goals of this dissertation is to determine the relationship between the gender roles of married women and their sources of class identification. To investigate this issue, wives' likelihood of class identification is regressed on a measure of gender role attitudes. The measure records people's attitudes about women's innate suitability for politics. It reads: "Tell me if you agree or disagree with this statement: Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most

women (NCPS, 1989a). Answers are coded 1 for agree, 2 for disagree. This item was originally used in 1974 and again in 1982. It was not incorporated into the survey as a consistent until 1985. This erratic use produces large amounts of missing data and significantly limits time-order analysis. Even so, this item is well suited for this dissertation not only because it is a good measure of gender role expectations, but also because it may permit speculation about the interrelationship of class identification, gender roles, and political values. Note, however, that this is only an approximation of subjects' gender roles. Gender is a significant and complex aspect of the social self, and a single measure gives only limited insight into the broad landscape of subjects' true orientation. Table 3.2 lists all variables used in this dissertation.

Table 3.2
List of Variables

Variable	CGSS Measure(s)	Response(s)	Years Available
Class Identification	CLASS	A-J	All
Race	RACE	A-J	All
Sex	SEX	1, 2	All
Education	EDUC	1	All
Income	INCOME10	1	1981 - 1990
Occupational Prestige	PRECT1080	1, 3	1980 - 1990
Father's Occ. Prestige	FAPREST0	1, 3	1980 - 1990
Mother's Occ. Prestige	MAMPREST0	1, 3	1980 - 1990
Political Party Ident.	PARTYID	3	All
Rate of Government	ROWLTH	2	1982 - 1990
Spouse's Occ. Prestige	SPPREST0	3	1980 - 1990
Gender Role Measure (Women in Politics)	WPOL	3	1982 - 1990 - 1998

Missing Data and Multicollinearity

Missing data are problematic for survey researchers in two ways (Smith 1991). First, and most obviously, missing data reduce sample size. But, secondly, missing data can create non-response bias. "If the values of missing data differ from that of the known data, then it biases the known data and makes [the sample] unrepresentative" (Smith 1991: 1). The class identification measure has less than 0.1 percent missing data. There is also very little problem with most of the socio-demographic variables. Age, occupation, and party identification, for example, each have 0.4 percent missing data. Education yields only 0.3 percent missing data; race and marital status have less than 0.1 percent

missing data (Smith, 1994: 4). Household income is the only socio-demographic variable used in this dissertation with considerable missing data (8.2 percent). Analyses of these missing data indicate a possible non-response bias among lower income subjects (Smith, 1994: 3). Spousal information reported in the GSS is as accurate as self-reported data, especially in the case of basic socio-demographics, and the level of missing data is "negligible" (Smith, 1994: 1).

Occupational prestige measures based on the 1980 GSS/HORO prestige scores scale are coded using occupation and education and thus have relatively limited missing values. By creating this new index, the GSS designers also address the problem of multicollinearity. Many socioeconomic variables demonstrate high rates of multicollinearity, that is, they are highly correlated with each other and thus show lower levels of significance (McKenney, 1994: 152). The use of this inferred measure should increase the reliability for the estimate of occupational prestige or class identification. Some degree of multicollinearity is expected between two-gender role measures, though the extent is unknown at this time. If there is significant correlation between the two gender variables (for example, R -squared = .90), then the variable with the lower R -squared (of the other independent variable) will be removed from the analysis.

Hypotheses

In the second part of this chapter I will describe the way these variables are entered into logit models to test my hypotheses. Then I will discuss the techniques I will use to analyze these data.

Models

Question 1: Class identification is the dependent variable for all questions. For hypothesis one, the predictive value of family background will be compared to other factors, such as education, occupational prestige, and income. My first set of research questions included

- 1) What factors contribute to class identification?
- 2) Is family of origin a more powerful predictor of class identification than any other single characteristic?
- 3) Is class identification the same for different races?

To test this set of questions I propose the following multiconditional logit model:

$$H1a) \text{ Class Identity (Y)} = \text{income, education, subject's prestige, father's prestige, race} + \text{error}$$

The previous model estimates the likelihood of identifying as higher class for each level of independent variable. This model specifies the interaction effect of each independent variable. Additional interaction is needed for race. Race is found to influence the overall likelihood to identify with higher classes, but it also is an intervening variable. In other words, race influences the contribution of other variables to the likelihood of class identification. To

determine if race has any additional interaction effect, the sample is subnested using by race. Then, the model is regressed again for each sample (racial) group. The above measurement of race effect on the predictive strength of other independent variables, specifically education and income. Therefore, there is a need for multilevel elaboration of his first model.

H1b) White class identity (Y_{1b}) = income, education, subject's prestige, and father's prestige

Black class identity (Y_{2b}) = income, education, subject's prestige and father's prestige.

Question 8: Crotts (1946) finds that the content of political ideology is rooted in perceived class interest. That is, people's attitudes about the size of government, social welfare programs, taxation, and social justice, for example, are products of their perceived place in society. One of Crotts's most significant findings was that class identification is highly correlated with political identity. My second set of research questions examines political identity.

3) How do sociopolitical characteristics such as voting, party affiliation, or ideology predict class identification?

A) Is this relationship weaker for African Americans compared to whites?

To test this question, I propose the following conditional logit models:

H2) Class identity = Political party identification

Class identity = Attitudes toward the equal distribution of wealth

To test for a race-based interaction effect, I use the dummy variable and repeat the series for each racial group.

- H2a) White class identity = Political party identification
 White class identity = Attitudes toward the equal distribution of wealth
 Black class identity = Political party identification
 Black class identity = Attitudes toward the equal distribution of wealth

The above model allows assessment of how party affiliation and attitudes about government may vary in their contribution to party identification for each racial group

Question 82: The third set of questions tests Darghley and Cadizius (1988) findings. It is necessary to substitute attitudes toward women's suitability for political participation for the variable they used: women's attitudes toward the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA measure was dropped from the 1988 in 1988. This model examines the relationship between non-traditional gender norms and women's class identification. My original questions included

- 1) What factors best predict women's class identity?
 A) Specifically, how much does husband's occupational prestige influence women's class identification?
 B) Do traditional or nontraditional gender roles influence this?
 C) Is this relationship weaker for African Americans compared to whites?

To test the sources of women's class identification, I propose the series of multivariate regressions listed below. Is this first series of multi-conditional models: note that I examine the effect of including mother's occupational prestige

- H0) Women's class identity = Subject's prestige, father's prestige, spouse's prestige, and mother's prestige

Wives' employment status can be estimated using the occupational prestige measure. To test for any interactive relationship between sources of wives' class identification and gender roles, I stratify the model by response to the gender role measure. The new subsamples, "believe women should stay out of politics" (Y_{1p}) and "don't believe women should stay out of politics" (Y_{2p}) are each regressed

$$H2a) \text{ Wives' class identity (Y}_{1p}\text{)} = \text{Subject's prestige} - \text{father's prestige} - \text{spouse's prestige}$$

$$\text{Wives' class identity (Y}_{2p}\text{)} = \text{Subject's prestige} - \text{father's prestige} - \text{spouse's prestige}$$

The above model provides separate estimations of effect for each independent variable in groups of women with traditional and non-traditional gender roles, respectively.

Estimation

In the first portion of the next three chapters, I report the simple descriptive statistics for each variable used, as well as a cross-tabulation of class identification and significant independent variables, such as race, education, and political party identification. I also report any significant missing data or multicollinearity of independent variables. Since the recorded dependent variable class identification is categorical, logistic regression is used to test the proposed models. This technique generates the odds of noting one category of the dependent variable for each level of independent variable.

Additionally, a correlation matrix is produced for each of the three question sets. This permits the examination of interrelationship between independent variables. When large numbers of cases are lost due to the inclusion of deleted measures which is a question asked only on two-thirds of surveys, a descriptive analysis is performed on the lost cases. Any significant shifts in the socio-demographic composition of the sample due to such inclusions are described. Note that the significant reduction in number of cases diminishes the extent to which findings may be generalized to wider populations.

The descriptive analysis of case identification and findings for the first set of research questions are described in Chapter Four. Chapters Five and Six describe the findings for the second and third set of questions, respectively.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS: SOURCES OF CLASS IDENTIFICATION

In this chapter, I describe the findings for my first set of questions. In doing so, I report the relationship between class identification and important sociodemographic variables which previous researchers have established as the sources of class identification. These variables are income, education, occupational prestige, father's occupational prestige, and race. This chapter is divided into three sections: Descriptive Analysis, Logistic Regression Analysis, and Discussion.

Descriptive Analysis

In this first section, I report significant descriptive statistics and bivariate relationships for the first set of research questions. I begin by describing the distribution of the dependent variable. I continue by briefly discussing the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample itself. In the last portion, I describe the simple bivariate (cross-tabular) relationships between class identification and income, education, occupation, prestige, father's occupational prestige, and race.

Class Identification

Frequencies of class identification in the 1989 GSS are largely concentrated in the working class and middle class. Ninety percent of subjects report one of these two identities ($N^1 = 2,104$). Subjects identify as "working class" and "middle class" with approximately the same frequency, each representing 45 percent of all responses. Nearly 8 percent of respondents identified as "poor" and nearly 4 percent identified as "upper class." Less than 1 percent of subjects refused to answer or offered unusable responses. Table 4.1 displays the distribution of class identification.

Table 4.1
Distribution of Class Identification, 1989 GSS Data

	N	Percent
Poor	169	8.0
Working Class	1002	48.1
Middle Class	1000	48.0
Upper Class	173	8.0
Missing/Refused to say	20	0.9
Total n	2004	100 ²

¹ Actual total exceeds 100 percent due to rounding

Basic Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The 1989 GSS sample is similar, though slightly more female than to American population estimates for that year (USSES, 1990). Women account for 55.76 percent of the sample; 45.35 percent of subjects were male. The majority

of respondents identified as "white" (80.8 percent). Subjects identified as "black" in 13.8 percent of cases, and 5.3 percent reported some other racial identity. There are no missing or unusable responses for race and race.

The distribution of income is discussed in the previous chapter (see Table 3.1). The mean household income range is \$50,000 to \$59,999. The median income range is \$35,000 to \$39,999. The distribution of income is skewed toward higher income levels (skewness = 1.5540). To illustrate this point, the highest possible choice (\$75,000 or higher) is the most frequently reported ($n = 320$). Clearly, the \$75,000 income question requires more exhaustive upper income ranges. Even so, nearly 65 percent of the sample reports income levels below the \$75,000 level, suggesting that this is an adequate measure as it is used in this dissertation. Subjects refused to answer or reported that they did not know their income in 5.4 percent of cases.

For the most part, educational attainment is distributed in predictable modes. Nearly 35 percent of the population (29.24 percent) has twelve years of total schooling. An additional 22 percent had a high school or equivalent degree and one to two years of additional education (presumably some college or technical training). Thirteen and a half percent of the population completed sixteen years of schooling, likely including a 4-year college degree. Slightly more than four percent of subjects have eighteenth years of education. Less than 3 percent report having fewer than ten years of education, and less than 2.2

percent reporting formal education. There are 0.34 percent missing or unusable values for education.

Subjects' occupational prestige varies from 17 (the score given to occupations such as miscellaneous food preparation) to 96 (physician). The mean score was 43.2 ($SD = 13.7$). This score is approximately equal to those of working-class occupations, such as industrial equipment operators, retail sales supervisors, heating/air conditioning mechanics, and nursing aides. Missing or unusable responses are relatively low for occupational prestige: only 4.25 percent of responses fall into one of these two categories. The distribution of fathers' occupational prestige is similar in proportion to respondents' occupational prestige. The similarity is only a proportional one, since 10.5 percent ($n = 234$) of responses are missing or unusable. I will discuss the impact of this missing data later. The distribution of missing scores for fathers' prestige varies from 18 to 86, with a mean score of 45.3 ($SD = 12.4$).

Brookside Relationships

Having described the distributions of class identification and other variables used in this study, I now examine some simple cross-tabular relationships.

Data indicate that class identification within the working and middle classes do not vary significantly by sex. Both men and women identify as "working class" in approximately 45 percent of cases. And both identify as "middle class" in approximately 45 percent of cases. Poor and upper class

identification varies somewhat by sex. Women are more likely to identify as "poor" (7.04 percent) compared with men (4.35 percent). Men are more likely than women to identify as "upper class," 4.12 percent and 3.77 percent, respectively. Finally, however, that poor and upper-class identification constitutes only a small portion of all identification. Any patterns found among poor and upper-class identities are less reliable due to small frequencies.

In cross-tabulation, racial groups appear to demonstrate different patterns of class identification. Whites identify as "poor" in 5 percent of cases, blacks in 7 percent. Whites identify as "working class" and "middle class" in 43 percent and 47 percent of cases, respectively. Blacks, on the other hand, are more likely to identify as "working class," 52 percent, and are even less likely to identify as "middle class," 33 percent. Whites identify as "upper class" twice as frequently as blacks. The third racial group demonstrates patterns similar to blacks, but as discussed in Chapter Three, this category refers to a broad spectrum of identities and does not permit useful generalizations.

Chi-square scores are generated for each cross-tabulation as the observation. Chi-square is a statistic measuring the probability that the observed relationship between variables results from sampling error. Thus, it tests a null hypothesis that there is no relationship between these variables. The chi-square score for class identification and race is 49.2606, significant at the .0001 level. In other words, the likelihood that the observed relationship occurs due to sampling error is less than .01 percent. Table 4.2 reports the distribution of class

distribution by race. The scores listed are column percentages unless otherwise noted.

Table 4.2
Class Identification by Race

	White	Black	Other
Poor	5.87	8.28	8.50
Working Class	42.78	53.23	49.23
Middle Class	47.34	33.33	38.87
Upper Class	4.34	1.08	1.88
Don't Know	0.17	0.2	0.62
Refused to say			
Column n	3348	402	183
Total n	3904		
Chi-square	43.3108	df = 10	p < .0001

For race of respondents, data for class identification and income (see Table 4.3) are grouped into quintiles by cumulative frequency of cases. Subjects with the lowest income levels (\$4,000 or less) identify as "poor" in 17 percent of cases. Subjects who hold the lowest income level see themselves as "working class" in 47 percent of cases, and "middle class" 33 percent of cases. The majority of subjects reporting the next two higher ranges (\$14,000 to \$20,499 and \$22,500 to \$28,999) identify as "working class." Consequently, the majority of subjects with the highest two quintiles of income (\$40,000 to \$74,999 and \$75,000 or higher) identify as "middle class." Eighteen percent of individuals reporting \$75,000 or higher income identify as "upper class."

More than 11 percent of subjects ($n = 343$) refused to answer the question or otherwise offered unusable responses to the question. However, analysis indicates that the proportions of missing data do not vary substantially between levels of class identification. Data are missing for 8 percent of poor subjects, 8 percent of working-class subjects, 5-percent middle class of subjects and 7 percent of upper-class subjects. This evidence suggests no relationship between subjective class and the tendency to not report income. The chi-square score for class identification and income is 754.6225, significant at the .0001 level.

Table 4.3
Class Identification and Income

	60- 14,999	15,000- 32,499	32,500- 49,999	49,000- 74,999	75,000- 97,000	No income
Poor	17.8	8.4	3.2	1.3	0.3	6.4
Working Class	47.1	62.8	55.2	43.5	14.5	37.0
Middle Class	33.3	27.8	40.1	53.9	66.6	47.6
Upper Class	1.8	0.7	3.1	0.7	18.2	8.7
Don't Know Refused to say	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	2.0
Column's Totals	545	285	715	600	529	343
Chi-square	754.6225 $df = 70$ $p = .0001$					

Class identification varies by educational attainment. The majority of subjects (56 percent) reporting a high school education or less identify as "working class." Only 55 percent of subjects with 15 years or more of

referring, presumably college graduates, identify as "middle class." The frequency of subjects with less than twelve years of schooling who identify as "poor" is six times higher than same educational level subjects who respond as "upper class." The number of upper-class subjects with more than 12 years of schooling is also nearly six times greater than those who identify as "poor." The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 1157$, $p < .0001$) suggests that the relationship between class identification and education is not a random. Table 4-4 reports the distribution of class identification and educational level.

Table 4-4
Class Identification and Education

	in High School	High School	Some College	College Grad.	Post Graduate
Poor	11.8	8.6	5.2	1.5	3.4
Working Class	52.7	56.1	48.4	27.0	18.6
Middle Class	55.1	35.3	42.8	84.0	83.6
Upper Class	2.0	1.5	3.8	7.7	10.5
Don't Know Refused to say	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.0	1.0
Column Total	461	848	788	388	273
Total n	3880				
Chi square	432.1157	$\chi^2 = 92$	$p < .0001$		

The variance of class identification by level of occupational prestige is similar to income and education. A majority of subjects with scores in the lowest three-fifths of the prestige index identify as "working class." Middle-class

identification is the most common identity among those who score in the upper two-fifths of prestige. Subjects with prestige scores in the highest quintile are least likely to see themselves as "poor" and identify as "upper class" in 8.2 percent of cases.

There are 123 missing cases for occupational prestige. Analysis of these cases indicates that they are distributed across all levels of class identification. Occupational prestige data are missing for 8.6 percent of subjects who identify as "poor," 3.0 percent for working-class subjects, 4.9 percent for middle class subjects, and 8.1 percent of upper-class subjects. Given that the proportions of missing data do not vary significantly between subjective classes, I assume there is no propensity for a particular class to avoid the question. The causes for missing data in this variable include, among other possibilities, unemployment and no response. Regrettably, I am unable to distinguish between these two reasons for missing data. As with race, income, and education, the chi-square for class identification and prestige (315-4017) is significant at the .0001 level. Table 4.6 reports the cross-tabulation of class identification and occupational prestige.

Table 4.3
Class Identification and Occupational Prestige

	Prestige Scores				
	17-20	21-28	29-35	36-52	53-80
Poor	8.8	8.4	8.3	3.4	1.1
Working Class	25.8	24.8	21.1	28.2	28.3
Middle Class	21.7	25.2	28.7	52.2	67.1
Upper Class	1.8	1.8	3.8	4.3	8.2
Don't Know/ Refused to say	1.8	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.1
Column total n	457	458	482	678	581
Total n	2766				
Chi-square	618.4817 $df = 285$ $p < .0001$				

As noted previously, proportions of father's prestige are distributed in ways similar to subject's prestige. This is also true when each are cross-tabulated with subject's class: the points made above largely apply to father's prestige. However, there is significantly more missing data for father's prestige ($n = 578$), and unlike subject's prestige, these missing data appeared patterned when cross-tabulated with class identification. Analysis of missing data indicates that 25.8 percent of subjects who identify as "poor" do not report information on their father's occupational prestige. Working-class subjects do not report this data in 22.2 percent of cases, middle-class subjects in 17.2 percent of cases, upper-class in 8.8 percent of cases. These findings suggest that the lower the subjective class, the less likely subjects are to report father's occupational

prestige. Even so, with valid responses for more than 50 percent of cases, father's occupational prestige still provides insight into the sources of class identification. To better understand how these variables relate to class identification, I will now discuss analysis of the first logistic regression model. For convenience, I refer to this logit model as the "main model."

Regression Analysis

Logistic regression is used to estimate each independent variable's effect on the probability of identifying as "higher class." The resulting coefficients indicate the change in the log odds of higher-class identification for each level of change in the particular independent variable, holding the other independent variables constant. The third column in Table 4-5 reports odds ratio estimates for each independent variable. These estimates are the proportional increase in the likelihood of higher identification for each increased level of independent variable. Consider the effect of income, for example. Income is positively associated with likelihood of higher-class identification; the greater the income, the more likely subjects are to have higher identification. The odds ratio estimates for income is 1.031, indicating that for each level of increase there is a 0.2 percent increase in the likelihood of identifying as "higher class." This effect is independent of all other variables included in the model. Thus, an individual with an annual income of \$18,000 (coded as 12 on the income measure) is 0.2 percent more likely to identify as "higher class" than someone earning \$16,000

(coded as 1/2). Income, as with other variables except race, is statistically significant at the $\alpha = .05$ level.

Note that these findings confirm the relationships discovered through cross-tabular analysis, but regression analysis provides more detailed information about the association between variables. Findings for education provide a good example of this relationship. For every year of education (a increase of seven years), the log odds of identifying as "higher class" increase by a factor of 1.2. Thus subjects with thirteen years of schooling ("some college") are 26 percent more likely to identify as "higher class" than those with only twelve years of schooling ("high school"). Education is the strongest predictor of higher identification included in the model. Increasing levels of education predicts greater likelihood of higher identification than one-unit increases in the other independent variables.

Higher levels of subject's occupational prestige and subject's father's occupational prestige also increase the probability of higher identification. The odds estimates for each are similar. Subject's own prestige has a slightly larger impact on likelihood to identify as "higher class" (1.02 per one-unit increase as opposed to 1.01).

Recall that in cross-tabulations racial groups appear to demonstrate different patterns of class identification. Regression analysis, however, produces different findings. The log odds estimate of race demonstrates the expected direction, that as black subjects are less likely to identify as "higher class." But,

surprisingly, this relationship is not statistically significant ($p = .1710$). Though race appears to have an impact on the likelihood of higher-class identification in cross-tabulation, more rigorous analysis does not confirm this association.

Table 4.6
Logistic Regression of Factors Predicting Higher-Class Identification

	Estimate	SE	Exp. (odds)	p Value
Income	.0893	.0107	1.093	.0001
Education	.1847	.0269	1.203	.0001
Occ. Prestige	.0188	.0044	1.019	.0001
Father's Occ. Pt. Rank	.0205	.0045	1.021	.0008
Race	-.2387	.1743	0.788	.1710
Intercept	-9.2602	.5625		
Total n	1899			

The next step is to examine the impact that race has on sources of class identification. The previous regression established a relationship between race and class identification, but now I explore how race alters the impact of other independent variables. The next two regressions duplicate the main effects model for one race while excluding the other.

There is a substantial change in probabilities when the sample is stratified by race. For whites, the odds ratio estimates for income, education, and father's prestige increase. The estimate for subject's prestige remains 1.025. Each of these variables remains statistically significant,

For blacks, however, the model generally loses predictive strength and statistical significance. Only occupational prestige demonstrates some relationship to higher-class identification. The odds of higher subjective class increase by 1.034 ($p = .0004$) for each increase in prestige. This impact of occupational prestige is slightly higher for blacks compared to whites. Education and father's occupational prestige show only weak relationships to class identification. Income shows no relationship to class identification. Table 4.7 shows the effect of these independent variables on class identification for each racial group.

Table 4.7
Logistic Regression of Factors Predicting Higher-Class Identification by Race

WHITES				
	Estimate	SE	Exp. (odds)	p-Value
Income	1.047	0.136	1.112	0.001
Education	0.019	0.001	1.020	0.001
Occ. Prestige	0.008	0.001	1.008	0.001
Father's Occ. Pr	0.027	0.006	1.028	0.002
Intercept	-0.7689	0.040		
Black n	1877			
BLACKS				
	Estimate	SE	Exp. (odds)	p-Value
Income	-0.0002	0.000	0.999	0.999
Education	0.004	0.001	1.004	0.001
Occ. Prestige	0.004	0.000	1.004	0.000
Father's Occ. Pr	0.004	0.002	1.002	0.000
Intercept	-3.380	0.402		
Black n	182			

Discussion

The distribution of class identification in the population is similar to those found by previous researchers, most particularly Centers (1943) and Jackson and Jackson (1962). Comparatively speaking, data from the 1988 GSS indicate slightly higher frequencies of individuals who see themselves as poor. Other patterns of class identification are consistent with those found by Centers in the late 1940s. That is, approximately 50 percent of class identification is nearly

equally divided between the working class and the middle class (the remaining portion is equally distributed between the poor and the wealthy).

The objective of this first set of research questions is to examine the relationship between class identification and its sources. As detailed in my review of the literature, income, education, occupational prestige, and father's occupational prestige are generally considered the sources of subjective class. The findings of this dissertation support this supposition. Logistic regression of these variables shows that they are positively associated with class identification. Of all the constructs included in this model, education best predicts subjective class. Annual income is also strongly related to class identification. And, though not as powerful predictor as education, higher levels of occupational prestige and father's prestige predict higher-class identification.

Race, however, is not associated with class identification (either positively or negatively). The lack of statistical significance for race in the main effects model is unexpected. As in previous research, this finding suggests that blacks do not share the same sources of class identification as whites. When the sample is subdivided into whites only, there is an increase in the predicted odds of higher-class identification for each level of income, education and father's prestige (that is, the predictive strength of the main model improves when it is applied to whites only). When the model is applied to blacks only, it ceases to offer reliable predictions of class identification. Only occupational prestige shows any relationship to higher-class identification among

biases, and this interpretation requires a liberal level of statistical significance (p -value = .10).

In the next chapter, I describe findings for the second set of research questions: those dealing with class identification and political discrimination. Much of the following discussion proceeds from the information described in that chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS – CLASS IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIOPOLITICAL VARIABLES

In this chapter, I describe the findings for the second set of questions. Three questions deal with the relationship between sociopolitical variables and class identification. Following from previous research on subjective class, I explore the relationship between class identification and one of the most basic sociopolitical variables: political party affiliation. Following Jackman and Jackman's (1993) suggestions, I also test the link between class identification and specific, more complex political values. The second sociopolitical variable measures subjects' attitudes about government's role in distributing wealth more equally. This chapter is divided into three sections: Descriptive Analysis (logistic) Regression Analysis, and Discussion.

Descriptive Analysis

In the first section, I report significant descriptive statistics and bivariate relationships for the second set of research questions. I begin by describing the distribution of political party affiliation and attitudes about government and the distribution of wealth (henceforth "government and wealth").

Sociopolitical Characteristics of the Sample

The political party affiliation varies widely in the sample. The most score is 2.8; a score of two corresponds to "likely Democrat, near independent." The distribution is platykurtic (Kurtosis = -1.128), indicating no dominant modes, or more simply that frequencies of responses are not distributed normally. Nearly 30 percent of the sample reports being a (moderate) Democrat. Democrat is the most common party affiliation. Republican is the second most common affiliation; 17 percent of cases select this category. Almost 15 percent of the subjects report that they affiliate as "independent," the third most common affiliation. Independent does not imply a third-party affiliation, since "other party" is included among the possible responses. Less than 3 percent of subjects selected "other party" as their affiliation. Generally, Democratic affiliations are more common than Republican, independent, and other parties, but not by a substantial margin. Specific Democratic affiliations (strong, not strong, near independent) are more frequent than corresponding Republican affiliations. For example, strong Democrats (13.6 percent) outnumber strong Republicans (10.6 percent). Table 2.1 lists the distribution of political party affiliation.

Table 6.1
Political Party Affiliation

Affiliation	Percent
Strong Democrat	13.17
Democrat	18.87
Weak Democrat, near Independent	13.28
Independent	18.74
Weak Republican (near Independent)	8.88
Republican	17.33
Strong Republican	10.57
Other Party	1.48
Don't Know/No Answer	05.21
Total n	2904

The responses for the second sociopolitical variable are structured as a Likert scale. A score of "1" indicates strong support for the statement "Government should do something to reduce income differences between rich and poor." A score of 7 indicates strong opposition to the statement. The mean for this variable is 3.88 ($SD = 2.212$). The midpoint on the scale, 4, is the most common response (21.3 percent). This may indicate either truly neutral feelings or apathy. Strong support for governmental intervention is the second most frequent response, 13.2 percent of cases gave this answer. Weak support (response 3) is the third most common answer, 15.7 percent of cases gave this answer. Generally, subjects were more likely to favor governmental intervention. Only 8.3 percent oppose and 13.2 percent strongly oppose some intervention.

Note that there are 20% missing cases for this variable. Table 5.2 displays frequencies for this variable.

Table 5.2
Attitudes Toward Government Intervention to Reduce Income Disparity

Options	Percent
1 - Government should act	17.18
2	18.36
3	15.74
4	21.25
5	12.31
6	8.21
7 - Government should not act	12.15
Don't Know/No Answer	2.78
Total n	1825

Sexual Relationships

In order to simplify interpretation, I collapse the different Democratic and Republican affiliations into single categories (see Table 5.3). Cross-tabulation of political-class identification and party affiliation provides evidence of a weaker association between the two. The nature of this relationship is consistent with Gentry's findings: the higher the subjective class, the greater the frequency of affiliation with the Republican Party (1980). Subjects who identify as members of the Republican Party see themselves as "poor" in 3 percent of cases, working in 30 percent, middle in 31 percent, and wealthy in 6 percent. Among those who

affiliate with the Democratic Party 7 percent see themselves as "poor" 45 percent as "working class," 44 percent as "middle class," and 3 percent as "wealthy."

The majority of subjects (82.8 percent), identify with one of the above parties. Overall, the frequency of membership in some other party is quite low, it is 43 or 14 percent of total responses. The majority of those who respond as independents or members of some other party also tend to identify as working class (54 percent and 59 percent, respectively). Upper-class subjects were least likely to report being politically independent or members of some other party.

As I noted in the previous chapter, chi-square scores are generated for each cross-tabulation in this study. The chi-square score for class classification and party affiliation is 184.8451, significant at the .001 level. In other words, the likelihood that the observed relationship occurs due to sampling error is less than .01 percent.

Table 5.3
Class Identification and Political Party Affiliation

	Democrat	Republican	Other	Other	No Answer
Poor	7.05	3.10	8.53	6.38	0.0
Working Class	45.18	38.44	55.14	58.14	53.0
Middle Class	44.41	53.08	33.35	34.86	33.33
Upper Class	3.93	3.73	3.84	0.00	0.00
Don't Know	0.15	0.38	0.44	0.20	10.67
Refused to say					
Column n	1333	1243	457	43	0
Total n	2994				
Chi-square	154.8487	df= 43 p< .0001			

Class identification also varies by subjects' approval of governmental equalization of income inequality. Respondents who favor governmental equalization tend to identify as "lower class" or "working class." Subjects who oppose governmental equalization were more likely to identify as "middle" or "upper." Only three percent of subjects expressing the most support for governmental intervention identify as "poor" or "working class." Among subjects expressing the most support for governmental intervention, 35 percent identify as "middle class" and only 1.5 percent identify as "upper class." Fifty-nine percent of those expressing the least support for governmental intervention identify as "middle class" or "upper class." The frequency of midrange responses (score = 4) is evenly distributed between the lower two and upper two subjective classes. Approximately 43 percent of "lower" and "working class," and 45 percent of

'middle' and 'upper class' subjects select this response. This cross-tabulation produces a chi-square of 130.6413 ($p < .0001$), further supporting the assumption that class identification and attitudes about government intervention are associated.

Table 8.4
Class Identification and Attitudes about Government Intervention to Reduce Income Inequality

	Favor 1-2	I.A.S.O. 3-5	Oppose 6-7	Don't Know	No Answer
Poor	10.7	4.6	6.6	4.44	0.60
Working Class	46.8	46.7	33.8	51.11	35.60
Middle Class	37.8	44.6	52.8	40.00	42.60
Upper Class	2.0	3.0	6.4	2.22	0.00
Don't Know	0.1	0.0		2.22	12.60
Refused to say					
Column n	551	549	360	45	6
Total n	1605				
Chi-square	130.6413	df = 40	$p < .0001$		

In order to understand the way race influences subjective class identity through other independent variables, I briefly digress from my primary analysis to examine the interrelationship between race and political party identification. I find that race and political party identification are linked. Blacks are less likely to align with the Republican Party than whites. Only 7.8 percent of black subjects identified affiliation with Republicans, compared to 42.7 percent of whites. Black

subjects aligned with the Democratic Party in 76.5 percent of cases, while in 49 percent of cases. Comparing these findings to those in the previous chapter, the cross-tabular association between race and party affiliation is stronger than the relationship between class identification and race. In the next section, I describe the regressions of class identification on political variables, as well as the effect of race on the relationship.

Regression Analysis

Logistic regression is used to estimate each political variable's effect on the probability of identifying as "higher class." Data indicate a strong and statistically significant relationship between sociopolitical variables and subjective class. The association between subjective class and political party affiliation has the expected direction. The more conservative the subjects are, the more likely they are to identify as "higher class." Subjects who align with the Republican Party are 47 percent more likely to identify as "higher class" than other subjects. Logistic regression analysis is significantly more sophisticated than the previous cross-tab analysis, but the findings remain consistent: the higher subjective class, the greater the frequency of affiliation with the Republican Party.

Recall that attitudes toward governmental intervention to equalize income inequality are coded with a seven-point Likert item. Interpretation of this regression is therefore more complicated than the dichotomous party affiliation measure. Even so, a relationship between this sociopolitical measure and

subjective class is still present. The simple bivariate analysis shows that as support for governmental intervention decreases, the likelihood of higher-class identification increases. Logistic analysis clarifies this and provides a more detailed understanding of the association. The odds of identifying as "higher class" increase by a factor of 1.18 for each unit change in attitude. Table 5-5 summarizes the logistic regression for sociopolitical variables.

Table 5-5
Logistic Regression of Political Variables Predicting Higher-Class Identification

	Estimate	SE	Exp. B(95% CI)	z-Value
Party Affiliation	.2843	.0532	1.458	.8021
Intercept	-3.0880	.2542		
Total n	2373			
Political Attitudes	1.800	.2248	1.183	.8021
Intercept	-3.6302	.1542		
Total n	1993			

Race impacts the relationship between sociopolitical variables and class identification. The relationships described in the previous section decline in predictive magnitude when the sample is limited to whites only. For example, the likelihood of higher-class identification increases by a factor of 1.47 for all subjects who affiliate with the Republican Party. However, this statistic declines to 1.37 for whites only. Likelihood estimates for attitudes toward governmental

interventions among white respondents are similar to estimates for the full sample. Both of these estimates remain statistically significant.

When the sample is limited to blacks only, the relationships between sociopolitical variables and class identification change. Black subjects who align with the Republican Party are more than twice as likely to identify as "higher class" than other blacks. The estimate remains statistically significant at the .05 level.

However, black respondents' attitudes toward governmental intervention has only a weak relationship to class classification. The odds of identifying as "higher class" increase by less than 5 percent for each unit change in attitude. Further, this estimate is not statistically significant. Table 5-5 lists findings for the second set of research questions by race.

Table 8.8
Logistic Regression of Political Variables Predicting Higher-Class Identification by Race

WHITES				
	Estimate	SE	Exp. (odds)	s-Value
Party Affiliation	.2418	.0855	1.272	.0055
Intercept	-0.8745	.0917		
Total n	1501			
Political Attitudes	.2441	.0214	1.179	.0005
Intercept	-0.5541	1.185		
Total n	1556			
BLACKS				
	Estimate	SE	Exp. (odds)	s-Value
Party Affiliation	.7553	.2043	2.127	.0002
Intercept	-0.8154	1.351		
Total n	335			
Political Attitudes	.6522	.0757	1.938	.0004
Intercept	-0.8748	.2597		
Total n	341			

Discussion

The investigation of class identification and sociopolitical variables is rooted in Crompton's research. This study approximates his conservative-radicalism battery by using two variables: political party affiliation and attitudes about governmental intervention to equalize income inequality. Recall that

Centers found a strong relationship between class identification and sociopolitical measures. He infers from this finding that class identification is tied to a broader set of cognitive structures, an integrated belief set, in which class interest and political ideology coexist without dissonance. As with this dissertation, Centers's research does not permit conclusions about the causal ordering of subjective class and political ideology. Though he could not conclude that subjective class interest and perceived class interest create political attitudes, Centers's analysis suggests agreement between the two variables. My study tests this basic finding: that subjective class is associated with political attitudes in a way consistent with (assumed) class interest, that is, that higher-class identification is more likely among people who are politically conservative.

Generally, the more politically conservative the subjects are, the more likely they are to identify as "higher-class." Of the two sociopolitical variables in this study, political party affiliation has the greatest value for predicting subjective class. Additionally, the direction of association remains positive when the sample is subdivided by race. No other variable in this dissertation is a better predictor of subjective class among black subjects than political party affiliation.

Centers found that wealthy people were more likely to believe that America is truly a land of opportunity, and that workers are treated fairly by their employers. Working-class people were more likely to believe that workers should receive more power in government, and that workers are not treated fairly by their employers. Data in this study show that attitudes toward governmental

intervention to equalize income inequality also predict higher-class identification. However, magnitude of log-odds estimates and statistical significance vary dramatically by race. Data reveal a simple association for whites: conservative political attitudes predict higher-class identification.

With the sources of class identification as described in the previous chapter, the sociopolitical value is not a statistically significant predictor of higher-class identification among black subjects. Thus, I conclude that race moderates the impact of attitudes about government intervention on class identification. Among white subjects, class identification appears consistently and linearly related to each of the sociopolitical measures, party affiliation and attitudes about government. But among black subjects, there are proportionately fewer responses opposing governmental intervention, even among higher-class blacks. I conclude from this that the way that blacks and whites define "conservative" may be fundamentally different. This is further evidence for Weber's perspective discussed in Chapter Two: that class identification alone does not account for political ideology. Though more general sociopolitical variables, such as party affiliation, predict class for all races, more complicated or "race-specific" attitudes do not. Race is a distinct field of identity not subsumed in any way by subjective class.

In the next chapter, I describe findings for the third set of research questions. The objective of this set is to examine the sources of class identification among married women.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS – CLASS IDENTIFICATION AMONG WORKING WOMEN

In this chapter, I describe the findings for the third set of questions. These questions examine the sources of class identification among women who are employed outside the home. As with the previous two chapters, I divide my description of the findings into three sections: Descriptive Analysis, (logistic) Regression Analysis, and Discussion.

Descriptive Analysis

In this section, I report significant descriptive statistics and bivariate relationships for the third set of research questions. I begin by describing the distribution of gender, marital status, spouse's occupational prestige, and related variables. I then finally review the bivariate relationships between these variables and class identification.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Sample

As with the U.S. population in general, race is not equally distributed in the sample. 55.8 percent of subjects are female, 44.2 percent are male. Marital status varies somewhat by race. Men, for example, are more frequently married than women. More than half of the male subjects (52.7 percent) are married, only 44 percent of women are married.

women, who tend to have longer life expectancies, also experience higher rates of widowhood. While 12 percent of women are widowed, only 8 percent of men are widowed. Men and women's rates of divorce and separation are closer than other marital statuses. Men are divorced in 16.7 percent of cases and separated in 4.8 percent of cases. Women are divorced in 14.4 percent of cases and separated in 3.9 percent of cases. Table 6.1 reports the percentage distribution of marital status for the sample.

Table 6.1
Distribution of Marital Status by Sex

Response	Men	Women	Total
Married	62.7	44.0	47.9
Widowed	8.1	12.3	9.7
Divorced	16.4	14.7	15.7
Separated	3.9	4.9	4.0
Single, never married	24.7	20.6	22.7
Totals	1285	1616	3064

Forty-five percent of subjects ($n = 1325$) provided occupational prestige information for their spouses. The distribution of spouses' occupational prestige scores is similar to subjects' prestige and fathers' prestige. The mean score was 44.9 ($SD = 13.4$), only slightly higher than the other mean prestige scores. The number of missing cases is not problematic for spouses' occupational prestige.

only 11 women or 1.5 percent of married women do not report occupational information for their husbands.

As I discussed in the methodology chapter, this set of research questions includes consideration of the subjects' mother's occupational prestige. Nearly 60 percent of subjects ($n = 1,029$) report occupational data for their mothers.

Analysis of missing data indicates no significant patterns in the non-response rates for this question. Mother's occupational prestige is only recorded when subjects' responses coincide with established occupational categories; data are not collected for mothers employed as homemakers. As with other prestige measures, mothers' scores vary from 17 to 81. The mean score was 40.7 ($SD = 12.8$), lower than subjects' mean score of 43.2 ($SD = 12.7$) and fathers' mean (43.5, $SD = 12.4$).

Gender Role Characteristics of the Sample

Lastly, this study approximates a gender role measure by using subjects' attitudes toward women in politics. As mentioned in Chapter Three, this is not a perfect measure. Ideally, I would prefer a battery of written measures, which would increase the reliability of this approximation. Even a more holistic subjective item, one that asks subjects how they define their own gender role status, is superior to my current technique. The available data, however, does not permit these approaches.

Responses to the "attitudes toward women in politics" question do not vary significantly by sex. Most subjects (74.4 percent) do not feel that men are

intrinsically more suited for politics. However, one-fifth of subjects agree with the statement, that is, they believe that women are less qualified for politics. This is not an insignificant proportion of responses. A meaningful minority of subjects hold an attitude that likely indicates traditional gender roles (for an example of similar gender role measurement, see Beeghly and Coiroan, 1988). The distribution of the gender role measure is reported in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2
Percentage of Agreement that Men Are More Suited for Politics than Women

	Men	Women	Total
Agree	21.1	20.8	20.9
Disagree	72.6	78.8	74.4
Not Sure	6.4	3.4	4.6
No Answer	0.9	6.1	3.2
Totals	860	1180	1940

Source Relationships

Having described the distributions of the variables used in this set of research questions, I now examine the cross-tabular relationships between these variables and class identification. Before doing so, however, I must note that the tabulating of data in this chapter is more complicated than in previous chapters and requires some explanation. There are three points to this explanation. First, since the goal for this portion of my study is to examine the sources of women's class identification, male subjects are filtered from the sample. For the rest of

this chapter, the term "subjects" refers to women only. Second, the cross-tabulation analyses that I am about to describe examine class identification among all women who report data for the particular independent variable considered. For example, data for the relationship between women's class and spouse's occupational prestige (see Table 4.4) include all married women. Note that the size and composition of each cross-tabulation is not constant, and the potential for generalizations between analyses is limited.

Third, the recent body of literature focuses on class identification among women who work outside the home. This focus is natural, both methodologically and intuitively. Methodologically speaking, researchers frequently have no way of determining the reasons why women without occupational data do not work. Intuitively speaking, working women have more potential sources of subjective class. If women tend to develop a sense of subjective class from sources other than their family, then certainly working women should as well. In order to contribute to this scholarship, I also examine class identification among working women. Thus, since the regression analysis, which will be described later, uses women's occupational prestige and husband's occupational prestige, this last portion of my analysis is limited to married women who work outside the home. In turn, the bivariate portion of my analysis is derived from a pool of all women, and the regression analysis focuses on working wives.

Note, further, that the size of the sample shrinks to an unusable level when the sample is sub-divided by race: there are only 36 married black women

working outside the home. Therefore, I abandon my use of race as a control for the remaining portion of this study. Race is, however, included in the multiequational logistic model. This provides some indication of the effect of race on class identification among working wives.

Class identification among women varies somewhat with marital status. Class identification among married women is slightly higher than the population as a whole. Wives identify with higher classes (middle and upper) more frequently than other classes, but not by a significant margin (approximately 8 percent). Similarly, divorced subjects were more likely to identify as "working class" or "poor," but again, not by a significant margin. The middle class was the most common identity for widowed women (though 10 percent of widows identify as "poor"). The majority of separated subjects (52.5 percent) are working class. More than half (51.6 percent) of single women see themselves as "working class." The chi-square score for women's class identification and marital status is 72.37185, significant at the .0001 level. The likelihood that the observed relationship occurs due to sampling error is less than .01 percent. Table 6.3 displays the percentage distribution of class identification by marital status.

Table 6-3
Women's Class Identification and Marital Status

	Marital Status				
	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Single
Poor	5.1	10.1	7.4	51.5	7.7
Working Class	41.6	35.5	46.7	52.5	51.6
Middle Class	47.3	51.8	43.5	52.5	39.8
Upper Class	5.9	3.7	1.5	1.5	1.5
Don't Know/ Refused to say	0.2	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.8
Column total n	713	218	272	80	338
Total n	1816				
Chi-square	72.3488	df = 25	p < .0001		

A strong relationship exists between women's class identification and their spouses' occupational prestige. The majority of women whose husband's occupational prestige score falls in the lowest three-fifths of the prestige index identify as "working class" (see Table 6-4). Middle-class identification is the next common identity among those whose husbands score in the upper two-fifths of prestige. Sixty-four percent of women with husbands in the fourth prestige quintile identify as "middle class." This prestige level corresponds with jobs such as secretary, computer technician, or factory supervisors. Women whose husband's prestige score falls in the highest quintile are least likely to see themselves as "poor" and identify as "upper class" in 14 percent of cases. The rates of women with high-prestige husbands who see themselves as "upper

class" are greater than the rates of upper-class identification among women with high-prestige fathers, 34 percent and 5 percent, respectively. Further, rates of identification with the upper class are greater for women with high-prestige husbands than for women with high-prestige occupations of their men. Recall from the previous chapter that the proportion of all the subjects with high-prestige occupations who identify as "upper class" is a little more than 5 percent. The chi-square score for women's class identification and husbands' occupational prestige (132.2155, $p < .0001$) indicates very little chance that the observed relationship results from sampling error.

Table 5-4
Women's Class Identification and Husbands' Occupational Prestige

	Prestige Scores				
	17-20	21-28	29-42	43-62	63-85
Poor	11.5	4.5	6.4	1.3	1.8
Working Class	29.1	55.4	51.4	27.0	28.0
Middle Class	26.5	37.1	40.8	62.6	57.0
Upper Class	0.0	8.8	2.1	8.3	14.0
Don't Know/Refused to say	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2
Column total n	116	134	140	166	154
Total n	702				
Chi square	132.2155, $df = 16$, $p < .0001$				

Class identification also varies by mother's occupational prestige (see Table 8.6). As with other prestige measures, the greater the mother's prestige, the higher the subjects' class identification. More than half of those whose mothers held very low (lowest quintile) prestige jobs identify as "working class." Similar frequencies of women whose mothers held very high (highest quintile) prestige occupations see themselves as "middle class." Among those with high-prestige mothers, 7.8 percent identify as "upper class." The rate of identification with the upper class among women with highest-quintile prestige fathers is only 5 percent. Though the chi-square score for class identification and mother's occupational prestige is not as high as the score for the prestige cross-tabulation, it still indicates a highly probable relationship. The score for class identification and mother's occupational prestige is 82.4198, statistically significant at the .0001 level.

Table 6.5
Women's Class Identification and Mother's Occupational Prestige

	Prestige Scores				
	17-20	21-28	29-45	46-52	53-65
Poor	12.8	8.1	3.8	5.6	5.2
Working Class	81.7	48.1	47.3	46.5	51.4
Middle Class	33.0	43.8	48.2	45.0	54.7
Upper Class	2.2	8.6	9.9	3.5	7.6
Don't Know/ Refused to say	9.4	9.5	9.0	9.5	9.8
Column total n	275	214	110	185	173
Total n	957				
Chi-square	62.4196 df = 20 p = .0001				

Patterns of class identification do not vary substantially by subjects' attitudes about women's suitability for politics.

Approximately 45 percent of those who believe that women are less suitable for politics identified as either "poor" or "working class." Another 45 percent of those holding this attitude identified as "middle class" or "upper class." Half of all subjects who do not believe that women are less suitable for politics identify as "poor" or "working class" slightly less than half identify as "middle class" or "upper class." Only two-thirds of the sample received the ballot containing this question, 943 cases are missing. Analysis indicates that class identification does not differ unexpectedly among those giving votes. The chi-square score for women's class identification and attitudes about gender and politics is 58.7368, significant at the .001 level.

Data for women's class identification and attitudes about gender and politics are given in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6
Women's Class Identification and Attitudes about Gender and Politics

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Poor	5.6	5.6	4.5
Working Class	43.1	45.4	45.1
Middle Class	45.8	44.2	43.8
Upper Class	5.5	4.1	2.3
Don't Know	0.0	0.0	0.0
Refused to say			
Column totals	438	1458	88
Totals	1825		
Chi-square	24.7380	df = 10; p = .0007	

Regression Analysis

Logistic regression is used to estimate the effect of women's occupational prestige and their family's prestige on the probability of identifying as "higher class." As with other portions of this study, the effect of race is also considered. Since spouse's and mother's occupational prestige is included, the sample size is reduced to 503 valid cases. Though this is a significant drop, it is a sufficient number for reliable statistics given that the regression includes only four independent variables. Henceforth, findings are derived from data on working

wives. This additional filter is intended to permit comparisons to other research conducted on working wives' class identification.

Data for working wives continue to indicate no clear relationship between race and class identification (see Table 6.7). Findings for the different types of prestige, however, show a positive relationship to class identification. Of these prestige forms, spouse's occupational prestige is the most significant, both substantively and statistically. The log-odds of identifying as "higher class" increase by nearly 7 percent with each unit increase in spouse's occupational prestige. This is more than twice the log-odds effect of women's own occupational prestige, which is also statistically significant. Women are a little less than 3 percent more likely to identify as "higher class" with each one-unit increase in prestige.

The effect of other family members' prestige is surprising. Father's occupational prestige is not a statistically significant predictor of women's likelihood to identify as "higher class" (p -value = .4143). Interestingly, mother's occupational prestige more closely approaches statistical significance (p -value = .1360). When race is taken out of the regression, the odds estimate for mother's occupational prestige increases slightly (.1017) and becomes significant at the .10 level (p -value = .0735). The odds estimate for father's prestige does not become significant when race is removed from the model (p -value = .3873). This finding suggests that, for women, mother's prestige may be a more important source of class identification than father's prestige.

Table 5.7
Logistic Regression of Women's Sources of Class Identification

	Coefficient	SE	Exp. (Odds)	p-Value
Prestige	1677	6109	1.627	0.060
Partner's Prestige	6647	6106	1.608	4.145
Mother's Prestige	1152	6096	1.615	1.060
Sources Prestige	4806	6103	1.606	0.001
Race	0245	4897	1.175	12.12
Intercept	-4.9445	7654		
Total n	585			

As I noted in Chapter Two, the most recent and dominant debate in the study of class identification concerns the comparative importance of women's own occupational prestige versus that of their husbands' occupational prestige. My initial regression of women's sources of class identification suggests evidence for the status-borrowing model. In other words, at this point, data indicate that husbands' prestige predicts women's subjective class more accurately than their own prestige.

However, Baughn and Cochran's research (1995) illustrates that gender roles mediate the impact of husbands' prestige on women's subjective class. Women who express attitudes that indicate a more liberal or progressive gender role tend to draw on their own job as a primary source of class identification. I examine this effect by stratifying the sample into two groups of women: those with more progressive attitudes about women in politics and those who believe men are

better suited for policy. This procedure transforms the apparent relationship indicated by the previous and more complex model.

Although further stratification of the sample by gender/attitudinal attitudes reduces the subject pool (the n of traditional gender role women drops below 100), there are still sufficient cases for reliable statistics. Further, only two independent variables are expressed in this model. Even so, I exercise need for caution in making generalizations about the broader population. The limited data available indicate that spouse's prestige remains a statistically significant predictor for increasing odds of identifying as "higher class" among subjects who hold traditional attitudes about women in politics (see Table 6.8). Within this group, women's own prestige fails to meet statistical significance (p -value = .97). To the contrary, both spouse's and women's own prestige remain significant for more non-traditional gender role women. The log-odds estimate for the effect of husband's prestige is similar to the one produced in the previous regression: 1.38. The estimate for women's prestige in this model, however, increases to 1.94, indicating that non-traditional gender role women are 4 percent more likely to identify as "higher class" with each one-unit increase in their occupational prestige. Table 6.8 lists data for women's sources of class identification by gender roles.

Table 8.6
Logistic Regression of Women's Sources of Class Identification by Gender Role

Traditional Gender Role Women				
	Beta	SE	Exp. Odds	z Value
Prestige	.0137	.0184	1.013	.6128
Spouse's Prestige	.3217	.0184	1.040	.0148
Intercept	-1.1330	.5506		
Total n	83			
Non-traditional Gender Role Women				
Prestige	.2722	.0183	1.048	.0001
Spouse's Prestige	.4742	.0183	1.064	.0001
Intercept	-4.4011	.5172		
Total n	148			

Discussion

Women and men experience class identification differently. To better understand the way subjective class is formed, we must consider gender. Gender influences the particular sources of class identification, as well as the magnitude of effect these sources have on people's class.

Data for the sources of women's class identification support this assumption. As with men, higher occupational prestige is a predictor of higher class identification among women. Unlike men, however, father's occupational prestige is not a significant predictor of subjective class. Moreover, mother's occupational prestige is more likely to provide insight into women's subjective

class. It is likely that the increase in female workforce participation during recent decades expands the potential sources of women's subjective class. Mothers are frequently occupational role models for women in post-industrial America.

These findings do not completely contradict the conclusions of previous researchers, such as Peiss and Krosz (1974), that status is "borrowed." In other words, these data show that husbands' class still predict women's class identification. But the evidence also suggests that women's own occupational prestige predicts their class identification in nearly equal magnitude to husband's prestige. In other words, women "share" in the sources of their subjective class. The difference in odds estimates for sources of non-traditional women's class indicates that gender roles mediate the process of class identification. Women who hold a more traditional, less egalitarian gender role are less likely to consider their own prestige as a source of subjective class.

In the next chapter, I summarize the findings and re-address the initial research questions in light of these data. I will also compare and contrast the research to previous research. I will conclude by making suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I summarize the important findings discussed in the three previous chapters. First, I revisit the initial research questions and evaluate the proposed models in light of the findings. Then, having summarized the findings, I discuss the implications of this research and the contribution this research makes to a better understanding of class identification. I conclude by making suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings

In the first portion of this chapter, I describe the findings for each set of research questions. For one, I consider each set of questions individually. Important conclusions from all three sets of questions are summarized in Table 7-1.

The Sources of Class Identification

This study finds that rates of class identification are similar to those found by previous researchers, in particular, Carstairs (1948) and Jussman and Jackson (1983). There are slightly higher frequencies of people who are subjectively poor, but other rates are roughly consistent with those found by Carstairs in the late 1940s. The vast majority of Americans (90 percent) identify

with either the "working class" the "middle class," and each of these classes is nearly equal in size. I will comment further on this in the section on implications and conclusions. Now I consider the first set of research questions, which asks

- 1) What factors contribute to class identification?
 - A) Is family of origin a more powerful predictor of class identification than any other single characteristic?
 - B) Is class identification the same for different races?

Previous research repeatedly establishes several important sources of class identification: namely, income, education, occupational prestige, father's occupational prestige, and race (Denters, 1946; Hodge and Thomas, 1968; Jackson and Jackson, 1985). This study confirms that each of these, except race, is still positively associated with higher subjective class, such that the higher the levels of each independent variable, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class. Education and income are the best predictors of class identification. However, higher levels of occupational prestige are also related to higher-class identification.

Family of origin as a source of subjective class. The findings for father's prestige depart from previous research. Denters, for example, finds that father's prestige is equally important to income and education (1946). Subject's family of origin continues to predict class identification, but not as strongly as individual characteristics, such as income and education. In other words, higher levels of education predict greater odds of identifying as "higher class" than similar increases in father's prestige. This finding suggests that people now consider a

broadest range of experiences as sources of their identity. Post-industrial Americans clearly factor their sense of class by relying on individual socioeconomic and family characteristics. The predominance of family as a source of subjective class has waned.

Race and class identification. Race does not predict class identification. The proportion of blacks who identify as "middle class" or "upper class" is substantially lower than the proportion of whites. However, race is not a statistically reliable predictor of class identification for either racial group. For whites, this finding suggests that there is no inherent class-based meaning to their race. Put differently, data do not suggest that whites see themselves as higher in class because of a super-ordinate racial status.

The lack of a statistically significant, negative association between race and class among black subjects is even more interesting. Moreover, these findings indicate that blacks do not share the same sources of class identification as whites do. Among black subjects, only occupational prestige shows any relationship to class identification. Higher levels of income, education, and father's occupational prestige do not reliably predict higher subjective class. These findings are consistent with those made by Jackman and Jackman (1993). As these researchers conclude, black subjects may assign less effective value to class. Though black subjects can readily identify with a subjective class, this identification is secondary to race as a source of broader identity.

Class and Sociopolitical Variables

The second set of questions deals with the relationship between sociopolitical variables and class identification. As Gertler first establishes and Jackson and Jackson later confirm, class identification is associated with political attitudes and ideology. It is hypothesized that socioeconomic identity and sociopolitical identity are interconnected portions of people's broader sense of self. If so, sociopolitical measures should predict class identification. My second set of questions asks:

- 2) How do sociopolitical characteristics, such as party affiliation or ideology, predict class identification?
- A) Is this relationship weaker for African Americans compared to whites?

Political party affiliation and class identification. Findings confirm this hypothesis. A positive association exists between class identification and political party affiliation, such that the more politically conservative the subjects are, the more likely they affirm identity as "higher class." Logistic regressions indicate that party affiliation is one of the more accurate predictors of class identification considered in this study. This association remains constant when the sample is subdivided by race. Moreover, the strength of association determined by odds-estimates and level of significance is high for both racial groups. There is no single variable in this study that predicts the greater likelihood of higher-class identification among black subjects than affiliation with the Republican Party. Political affiliation predicts subjective class, regardless of

race. These findings are roughly consistent with Jackman and Jackman's research (1983).

Attitudes about the role of government and income inequality. To further explore the relationship between subjective class and politics, I examine the relationship between class identification and more complex political values. Specifically, I focus on subjects' attitudes about the government's role in distributing wealth more equally. I include this variable in the analysis because it is a good supplement to party affiliation. Using this measure provides a more exact test of any relationship between class interest and political values. This variable measures a discrete political value about the role of government; party affiliation is a broader, more general variable. Whereas party affiliation includes some subjective variation in ideology, attitudes about governmental intervention to equalize income inequality are specific measures of people's politics.

Initial findings show that attitudes toward governmental intervention to equalize income inequality also predict higher-class identification. The more subjects oppose this intervention, the more likely they are to identify as "higher class." However, unlike party affiliation, the relationship varies dramatically by race. Attitudes toward governmental intervention are not a statistically significant predictor for higher-class identification among black subjects. In other words, for black subjects there is no clear relationship between class and attitudes about the role of government. Higher-class black subjects fail to oppose intervention as much as others, but the relationship between these attitudes and subjective class

appears random (p -value = .41). I conclude that race mediates the influence of attitudes about government intervention on class identification.

Class Identification among Working Women

Lastly, I examined the sources of class identification among working women. My third set of research questions asks:

- 3) What factors best predict married women's class identity?⁸
- A) Specifically, how much does husband's occupational prestige influence wives' class identification?
- B) Do traditional or nontraditional gender roles influence this?

Potential sources of women's class identification include family of origin, family of choice, and individual socioeconomic characteristics. Father's occupational prestige, historically one of the best predictors of subjective class for (white) men, is not a useful predictor of women's subjective class. There is a weak but positive relationship between mother's occupational prestige and class, but this variable is significant only when race is excluded from the regression. Generally, women's family of origin is not strongly associated with their class identification.

The impact of husband's occupational prestige. Women's family of choice, or rather husband's occupational prestige, is positively associated with class identification. Of all potential sources of women's class identification examined, husband's occupational prestige is the best predictor of women's class. This study finds support for the status-borrowing hypothesis, that is,

women derive much of their subjective class from their husband's class. In sum, the greater a husband's prestige, the higher the women's class identification.

Gender roles as predictors of class identification. However, working women's own occupational prestige is also positively associated with class identification. The particular extent to which working women's prestige predicts their class is influenced by their gender roles. The odds estimate for subject's prestige is nearly as large as husband's prestige among women who express more egalitarian attitudes. But occupational prestige has no relationship to class identification among working women who express more traditional gender roles. These findings suggest that the more egalitarian the women's gender roles, the more likely the subjects consider their own prestige when forming subjective class.

Figure 7.1
Important Conclusions

Model	Conclusion
1	The higher the levels of education, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class
1	The higher the levels of income, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class
1	The greater the people's prestige, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class
1	The greater the father's prestige, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class
1A	Education and income are better predictors of higher subjective class than the father's prestige
1B	Prestige does not predict subjective class
2	The more politically conservative the subjects are, the more likely they are to identify as "higher class," regardless of race
2	Among white Americans, the more they oppose governmental intervention, the more likely they are to identify as higher class
2A	Among black Americans, attitudes about governmental intervention do not predict higher class

Figure 2.1 (Continued)

Model	Conclusions
3	Father's prestige does not predict working women's subjective class
3A	The greater the husband's prestige, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class among working women
3A	The greater the working women's prestige, the greater the likelihood of higher subjective class
3B	The more egalitarian the woman's gender roles, the more likely women consider their own prestige when forming subjective class

Implications and Conclusions

This dissertation is the first comprehensive examination of class identification since Jackson and Jackson's 1982 study. In the period of time since their research was published much has changed about the economy, the occupational structure, and the political landscape in the United States. Female workforce participation rates are greater, there are more wealthy people now, but there are more working poor (Johnson and Parker, 1987; Lorenson, 1992). This study is a reexamination of class identification in the post-industrial period. As with Gennep, Jackson and Jackson, and other researchers, I explore the fundamental questions about subjective class: what are its sources, how does it relate to ideology, and what is the impact of gender and marriage? The findings

answer each of these questions. In so doing, they provide insight into the complexity of class identification in contemporary America.

I draw five substantive conclusions from the findings. I briefly mention these now and will discuss them later in greater detail. The first conclusion is that the model proposed by Cantors in 1943 will predict class identification for white Americans. However, the primary source of subjective class has shifted away from family of origin to more achieved characteristics. The second conclusion is that the model fails to predict class identification for black Americans. Race is a significant, marked identity that confounds the process of class identification. Third, class identification is related to sociopolitical variables. Though race mediates the more complex aspects of this association, people tend to hold political attitudes that are consistent with their class interests. Next, I conclude that working men derive a sense of subjective class from both their spouses and their jobs, and gender roles determine the impact of the latter source. Finally, I speculate that the apparently stable patterns of class identification indicate, at least indirectly, consistency in the structure of social stratification throughout the period. I will now discuss in each of these conclusions.

The first conclusion is that education, income, and occupational prestige serve as sources of class identification. Family of origin, however, is not strongly associated with class identification, as previous researchers found. I believe that this finding is important, it contributes to a better understanding of the nature of

post-industrial or "information-age" American society. As we move into the era characterized by technologically enhanced rates of social exchange and higher levels of residential and occupational mobility (not "social" mobility), we move away from reliance on the traditional sources of subjective class. Though family of origin remains an important predictor of objective class (Beeghly, 1990), Americans are more likely to rely on immediate individual characteristics as means of fixing their sense of socioeconomic self. Today, Americans are more than members of a family: they are levels of education, they are jobs, and they are ideologies.

This study also yields important findings about the role of race in class identification. Black Americans do not have the same sources of class identification as whites. This finding leads to important conclusions. First, immediately, it suggests that studies of class identification should not pool subjects of different racial groups into the same sample without analyzing the effect of race. More importantly, findings in this study support the conclusion made by Jackman and Jackman. They argue that race supercedes class as identity among members of racial minorities. Recall that black subjects' race appears associated with class in cross-tabulation. Only through regression analysis does race become problematic. The first model does not predict black Americans' class because many black subjects who report intermediate or even high levels of education and income still see themselves as "working class." Intuitively this makes sense. People who experience systematic, life-long

inequality are least likely to consent to, or even develop, any superordinate identity. This finding says as much about the continued importance of race in America as it does about the sources of class identification.

This study finds that political party affiliation is an excellent predictor of class identification. This finding implies, generally, that people's political attitudes are consistent with their economic self-interest. The association of class identification with attitudes about the role of government further supports this assumption, at least among whites. Thus, the study does not support the assertion that class interest no longer has significant impact on political attitudes (Manor, 1988).

Though the association between party affiliation and class holds true for both racial groups, there is no relationship between attitudes about the role of government and subjective class among black subjects. I conclude that the content of political identity varies by race. As with the sources of class identification, subordinate racial identity creates differences in the ways people define themselves. In other words, being "politically conservative" has different subjective meaning for people of different racial groups. Among black Americans, affiliation with the Republican Party is less likely to preclude limited support for governmental intervention to equalize income inequality. Here, too, *knighthood* is gained *into* race, as well as class.

Fourth, my research supports that working wives derive their class from both their spouses and their jobs. Odds show that husband's prestige still

predicts wives' class identification. Data also indicate, however, that women's non-occupational prestige predicts their class identification in nearly equal magnitude. Generally I conclude that most wives "inherit" the sources of their subjective class with their husbands. But more specifically, findings suggest that women's gender roles influence how much they consider their own prestige as a source of class. Wives who hold a more traditional, less egalitarian gender role are less likely to consider their own prestige as a source of subjective class.

Again, this conclusion makes intuitive sense. Class identification is more than an identity. It is a marker for a particular lifestyle, a statement about a person's past, and even a claim about privilege. The sociological perspective indicates the recognition that who or what we are is shaped by our environment. Class identification is not the product of mere self-reflection, it arises through social interaction. The context and form of interaction is constrained by social norms, as are the subjective states that arise through the process. Traditional gender norms shape and constrain women's sources of class identification. The extent to which women accept or reject these norms influences the sources of their subjective class.

Lastly, the relative stability of class identification over the last fifty years has more general implications. I began this chapter by noting that this research finds rates of class identification similar to those found by Canters in 1949 and Jackson and Jackson in 1985. The vast majority of Americans still identify with either the "working class" or the "middle class," and each of these classes is

steadily equal in size. The number of people who see themselves as "poor" has grown slightly, but generally speaking, patterns of class identification in the United States are stable. What this suggests is that subjective class is a lasting cultural process with inter-generational longevity. Though America has transitioned to a post-industrial (information) mode of production, the patterns of people's socioeconomic identity remain consistent with those found in the past. This has great implication for the contemporary study of social inequality. The literature shows that class identification is associated with objective socioeconomic variables such as income, education, and occupational prestige. This research confirms these associations. Therefore, stable patterns of class identification suggest that the fundamental patterns of social inequality in America have not changed, despite the economic transformation. What has occurred in the United States during the last half-century is a transition in the form of work, but not necessarily in the nature of inequality. The post-industrial mode of production may bring technological improvements to some, but it has not ended social stratification.

Suggestions for Future Research

I make two suggestions for future research. The first concerns the operationalization of the dependent variable, and the second calls for a consideration of an additional independent variable not available to this research.

Empirical investigations of class almost universally rely on closed-ended questions. The technique has disadvantages. As Jackman and Jackman point out:

Confronting a respondent with a question such as "what social class do you feel you belong to?" relies on the single cue "social class" to convey the referent of the question "correctly" (i.e., in social-scientific terms). The provision of [exhaustive] response options cues the respondent to what the investigator means by "social class." (1983: 14)

A more qualitative, open-ended approach might yield greater understanding about the "gray zones" of class identity, such as the distinction between the middle class and the upper-middle class.

I find it odd that the status-consciousness-sharing debate was the only controversial issue to emerge from the early research on class identification. Other potential controversies are still unresolved. For example, Hodge and Thomas (1988) found that subject's class is closely correlated with peer group class composition. Jackman and Jackman (1983) found evidence to the contrary. Future research might consider examining the relationship between peers and subject's class... Is Scarron's (2000) notion of "network families" a form of peer group, an important source of class identification? An investigation of peers as a source of class may clarify the relative decline in association between family and class.

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Matthew Michael Maximilian Wilson received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Florida in 1998. That year he moved to Illinois where he received a Master of Arts degree in sociology from Western Illinois University in 1999. He worked for two years as an adjunct instructor at Spring River College in Central Illinois. During that time he also served as an officer in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and a consultant to the U.S. Department of Labor. In 1994, he returned to Gainesville, Florida to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy degree. In 1998, he became an assistant professor of sociology at Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida, where he now resides. Professor Wilson's research interests include social inequality, family sociology, and community studies.

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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Sociology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December, 2000

Dean, Graduate School